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PlayStation® 2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

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ISSUE 30 AUGUST 2004
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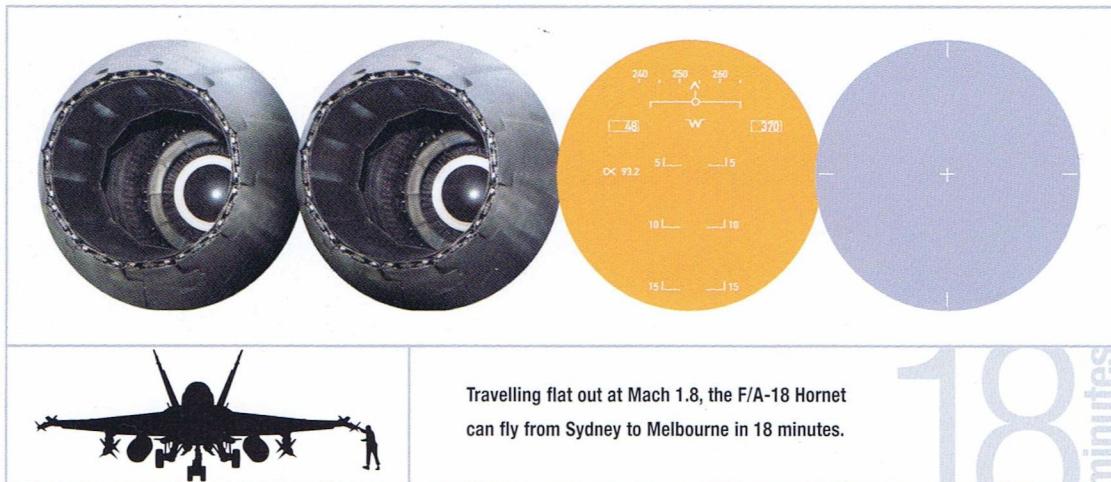
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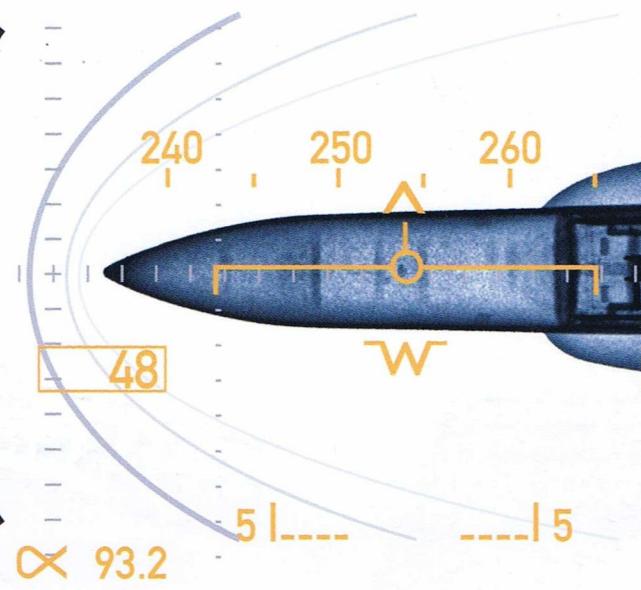
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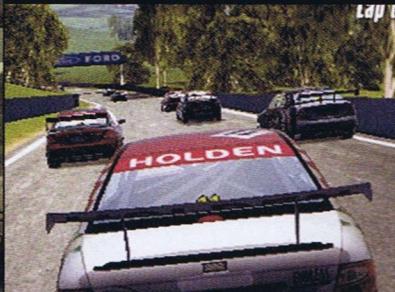
There's been a lot of hype about this hot new FPS, so we get hands-on to see what all the fuss is about!

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JUICED



RESIDENT EVIL APOCALYPSE



ATHENS 2004



SPIDER-MAN 2



PlayStation® 2

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WRITE TO
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For PlayStation 2 technical support and registration queries, please call 1300 365 911. Distributed throughout Australia by Gordon and Gotch. Printed in Australia by Webstar. Distributed throughout New Zealand by IMD.

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EDITOR'S LETTER

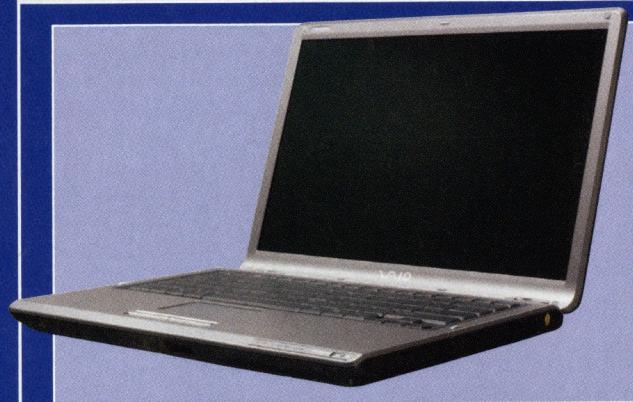
Killzone, the hotly anticipated shooter for PlayStation 2 is inching closer to completion but we couldn't wait any longer... After months of begging and pleading for early copies of the game, we finally marched ourselves over to PlayStation HQ and demanded a thorough hands-on. The upside? We got in, and we played it. But there was also a major downside - the code is already so impressive that it just makes us want the game even more! In this issue you'll find Australia's first full hands-on preview, complete with all the finer details on its unbelievable weapons and an insightful interview with the development team. A lot has already been said and claimed about Killzone, so we've confirmed and laid a lot of those rumours to rest in our huge feature, starting on page 32.

In another big month of OPS2 exclusives, we've also managed to nail down the very first pictures of Resident Evil Apocalypse starring Milla Jovovich and scored a great interview with the funny lads and game lovers in Melbourne comedy trio, Tripod. We're the first magazine in the country to publish Apocalypse photos and you won't find any other games magazine with a Tripod interview.

There are some impressive new games about to be released and we've scored some early reviews to help you dictate your buying and hiring decisions. Mammoth games like Driv3r, Harry Potter and The Prisoner of Azkaban, Spider-Man 2 and Shrek 2 have been just some of the games on the OPS2 radar. Next month, I'll be fortunate enough to be off trekking around the world on a month's break and your favourite magazine will be in the very capable and experienced hands of games legend Narayan Pattison. Big Naz already has a lot of fantastic stories in the pipeline so it definitely won't be an issue to miss. Until then, be sure to keep your Dual Shocks busy!

See you soon,

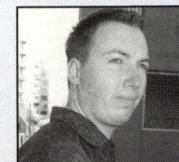
RICHIE YOUNG
Editor



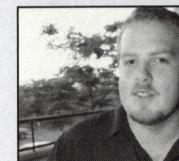
PlayStation® 2

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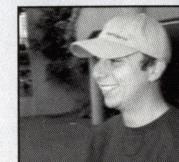
BEST MEMORY OF WINTER...



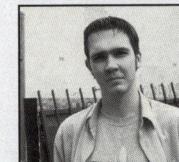
NARAYAN PATTISON
"Winter was heaps better when I was a kid, living in the Snowy Mountains. I used to ski to school, dammit. Now skiing's gotten all trendy and I can't even afford to go. Winter sucks."



TRISTAN OGILVIE
"I went on an all-male bonding trip to the snow. The Jindabyne nightife was jumping, and although the girls kept slapping us in the face, at least it kept our cheeks warm."



MICHAEL DEVRIES
"Jumping back into the car after the early surf, cranking up the stereo and turning the heat up to maximum. Watch those feet go from deep purple to fiery red... ahhhhh."



LUKE REILLY
"I'd seen Dumb and Dumber but I didn't believe that Hollywood trickery. I stuck my tongue in the freezer to prove it wouldn't hurt. My third skin graft is going nicely."



MICHELLE STARR
"You know how you see on movies a truck drives through a puddle and splashes someone from head to foot? You know how you think that never happens in real life? Hah."



ED LOMAS
"My favourite winter has to be this year's because I don't have to suffer it - I'm hopping a plane tomorrow to nip back to England for its sweltering 15 degree summer heatwave."

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Turn to page 76 for all the details...

A WORLD AT WAR FOR PARATROOPERS BEHIND ENEMY LINES...

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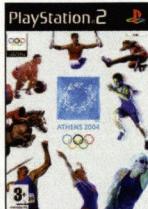
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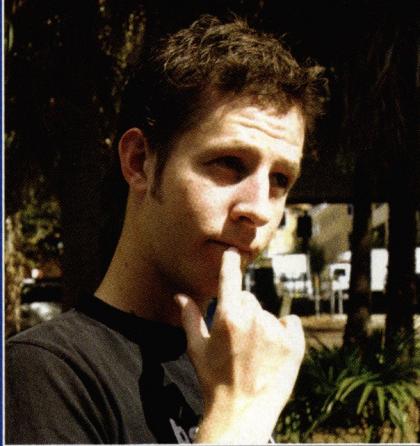
DISTRIBUTOR: SONY
GAME TYPE: SPORTS
OUT: JULY
PLAYERS: 1
(FULL GAME 1-8)



REVIEW
ON P48!



With the 2004 Summer Olympic Games kicking off in less than a month's time, you'd better get some practise in! Sony's official Olympic videogame features a huge selection of events, and we've got a taster of three for you. In the 100 Metres, hold the L1 button until the gun goes off, then hammer **X** and **○** as fast as possible to run. For the High Jump you need to time your footsteps perfectly, then press L1 to jump; and for Discus you've got to spin the analogue stick to get speed up, then press L1 to stop the angle around the 45-degree line!



Hi there, and welcome to another awesome OPS2 demo disc! This month everyone's gone Olympic crazy – the real athletes are about to start doing their thing in Athens, we've been pummeling away on our DualShock 2s for our own office championship (see page 48), and now you can join in, with three events on this month's DVD.

We've also got a first look at *Mashed*, a racing game which doesn't aim to take on *Gran Turismo 4* in terms of realism, but instead goes straight for the fun jugular! There's also a chunk of the huge new *Syphon Filter* adventure on there, a sampler of the new edition of *MTV Music Generator*, an insane slice of *Serious Sam*, and a quick kickaround on Sony's *This Is Soccer 2004*. And make sure you check out the *Jak 3* video as well! Wooo-hah!

Ed Lomas

ED LOMAS
Associate Editor

PS To use this DVD, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the **↓** and **↑** keys. To choose within a section use **←** and **→**. Press **X** to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.

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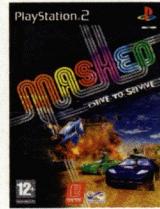
Every issue, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine* brings you something no other magazine can – playable demos. Offering exclusive levels, tracks and missions, our playable DVD enables you to try the very latest PS2 games before you buy, often weeks, even months before release. Why risk your hard-earned cash on a \$100 game when you can try it out on our cover-mounted DVD? From *GT3* and *MGS2* to *TimeSplitters 2* and *Final Fantasy X-2*, we've always featured playable demos of the games that matter. Throw in top quality video footage of the hits of the future and our DVD is the best bargain on the shelves.

DISC PROBLEMS?

If your disc isn't working properly, simply send it back to this address for a replacement.

Disc Returns

Official PlayStation 2 Magazine
P.O. Box 1037, Bondi Junction
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DISTRIBUTOR: TBC
GAME TYPE: RACING
OUT: TBC
PLAYERS: 1-4

MASHED

If you've ever played any of the classic *Micro Machines* series before you'll have an idea of what *Mashed* is all about. Four racers whizz around a track, trying to get far enough ahead that the others get left off the edge of the screen. Any dirty tactics you can think of are acceptable, and there are even power-ups dotted around to make being dastardly easier. Our demo also features a one-player time-trial mode, but pick 'Quick Battle' if you want to take three computer opponents on in a 'first to eight points' race. Look out for a review in a forthcoming issue of *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*.



MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 3



DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI
GAME TYPE: MUSIC CREATION
OUT: JULY
PLAYERS: 1

The latest installment of the *Music Generator* series gives you the chance to either create your own tunes from scratch, or remix songs from Snoop Dogg, OutKast, Sean Paul, Fabolous, The Ones and Carl Cox. Our demo lets you check out the 'Studio' section where you're given a blank canvas upon which to work your magic – listen to the available samples and simply 'paint' them onto the mixing board where you'd like them to play. Or try out 'Remixer', where you'll find tunes by Snoop Dogg and Carl Cox which you can edit with a selection of simple options.

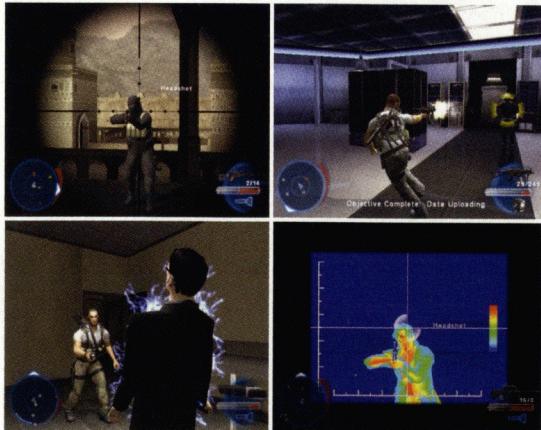


OTHER MAGAZINES LET YOU WATCH
OPS2 LETS YOU PLAY

SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN

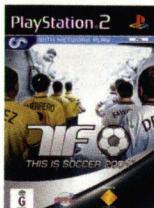


DISTRIBUTOR: SONY
GAME TYPE: ACTION
OUT: JULY
PLAYERS: 1
(FULL GAME 1-4)



The long-awaited PlayStation 2 follow-up to one of the most popular action series on PSOne sees you commanding a squad of secret operatives in a battle to save the world from terrorists planning to release a deadly virus. The action's frantically fast-paced, as our playable demo of the Carthage stage will demonstrate. You'll be dropped into the middle of a hectic street battle, and will need to use your agility to avoid being shot while trying to break into an enemy-packed building. Make sure you figure out how to strafe (run sideways) as quickly as possible, as this skill makes one-on-one gun battles a whole lot easier. And whatever you do, don't hang around!

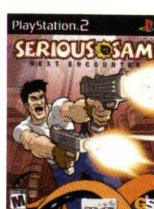
THIS IS SOCCER 2004



DISTRIBUTOR: SONY
GAME TYPE: SPORTS
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1-2
(FULL GAME 1-8)



While you may well already be loyal to either the *FIFA* or *Pro Evolution Soccer* series of games, Sony's own PlayStation 2-exclusive soccer title has been improving steadily over the years, and is now up there with the best. We reckon you should give the youngster a try-out and see just what he's capable of! Our playable demo gives you and a friend the option of playing as either England or Brazil in a single five-minute half. Remember that the full game can be played online with eight people at a time!



DISTRIBUTOR: TAKE 2
GAME TYPE: FPS
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

SERIOUS SAM: THE NEXT ENCOUNTER

While it may be called *Serious Sam*, the seriousness here isn't the kind of dark, moody, slow-paced seriousness of certain other first-person shooters. Instead, this is serious action all the way! Taking cues from classic fast-paced blasters like *Doom*, *Serious Sam* sees you shooting hordes of creatures with enormous weapons while exploring huge castles, space stations, and other monster-packed locations. Bonus points are awarded for 'combos' – shoot enough bad guys in quick succession and you can activate the Killing Spree mode, allowing you to blast even more stuff in a carnage overload! *Serious Sam* is available now at a special low price.



reel footage

Exclusive trailers for two of the hottest platform games of 2004!



JAK 3

The first game was fantastic, the second game even better – just wait till you see this in action!



SLY RACCOON 2

The wiley raccoon thief is sneaking back to PS2, this time with a whole load of sidekicks.

downloader

Select these save files to download them to your Memory Card!

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA

Los Angeles is a big city – if you're unable to get through the game yourself, try our save instead.

JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

Save yourself the hassle of playing the game, and boot up this save file direct from Q's laboratory.

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

One of the most surprisingly smart games to come along in a long time, and we've played it through.

Also downloadable...

THE GETAWAY

SILENT HILL 3

STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS

loading...

EDITED BY NARAYAN PATTISON



V8S GET MORE GRUNT!

Codemasters confirm new features for V8 Supercars 2



We know many of OPS2's readers have been wondering why Codemasters has been decidedly quiet on the V8 Supercars front. We can finally reveal however, that there was very good reason for it and PS2 owners will soon be able to rejoice – our version of V8 Supercars 2 will pack in more features, cars and tracks than the one recently released for Xbox. This is a substantial and important announcement and PS2 owners are set to reap the massive benefits!

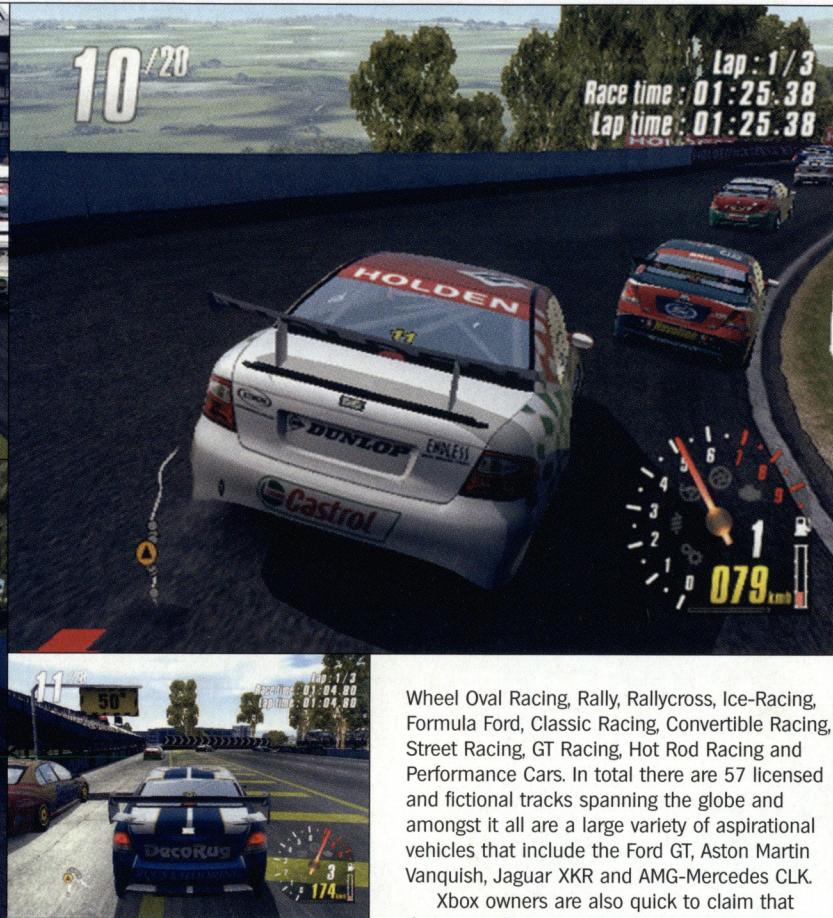
Over the past months, OPS2 has been able to confirm certain new features that did not appear in the original game. Even more exciting though, is that we recently spoke with the man behind the game and Codemasters legend, Gavin Raeburn.

One of V8 Supercars 2's biggest new additions is the inclusion of Holden Racing Team (a glaring omission in

the original) and Raeburn admitted that signing up the Red Devils was merely a matter of time. Previously, HRT had an agreement with EA, which limited its involvement in other games, like the first V8 Supercars.

"We have always wanted to feature HRT in the V8 Supercars series, but this has not been possible in the past due to licensing reasons. This has not stopped us from trying to license HRT for our game and we managed to do that just in time for V8 Supercars 2!" Raeburn said.

Despite the successes of games like *Need for Speed* and *Midnight Club*, Codemasters has opted to remain focussed on its strengths – track-based racers. The company has built its reputation on games like *TOCA*, *V8 Supercars*, *Collin McRae Rally* and *Micro Machines* and has pledged to concentrate on improving the quality that it is already famous for.



G'day Gav

Sure enough, Gavin Raeburn loves his cars and his Porsche 911 can often be seen flying around the streets and surrounding windy roads of Leamington Spa in England, where Codemasters is based. Raeburn is one of the stalwarts at Codemasters and has worked on the TOCA series (which gave birth to the V8 Supercars games) as well as (drum roll) *Psycho Pinball* (PC, Sega Genesis). Working on one of the world's biggest racing franchises is obviously also an affair of love but Raeburn is also able to recognise other top racers. "On PC, *Live for Speed* and EA's *F1 Challenge* are impressive. When it comes to the consoles, there are many games that have a few good elements, but none that really shine for us," he says.



"One of our core values for the V8 Supercars series is to only include the exciting and real motor sport that you can watch on TV most weekends. Fictional street racing does not fit within this brief and is therefore not included," Raeburn says.

One significant new step however, is moving the racing environment online. V8 Supercars 2 will impressively feature eight-player online, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. "The online championship system is very flexible and includes a whole host of features that the online community will appreciate. When hosting an online championship, players will have full control over race length, track order, rules and even collisions. They will be able to run everything from a quick one-lap challenge to a full championship season with 1000km+ races.

With tyre wear, pit stops, fuel stops and our sophisticated damage engine, we've allowed players to really experience the deeper tactical elements of real-life motor sports. Also, integrated tightly within the game are unique player logins, matchmaking, in-game friend lists, real-time voice for all players and a ranking system," he enthusiastically continued.

If that's not enough to whet your whistle then stop and have a think about just how substantial the new game actually is. All up, and on top of the V8 Supercar series there are 32 championships that cover motor sports such as Open Wheel Grand Prix, Truck Racing, Open

Wheel Oval Racing, Rally, Rallycross, Ice-Racing, Formula Ford, Classic Racing, Convertible Racing, Street Racing, GT Racing, Hot Rod Racing and Performance Cars. In total there are 57 licensed and fictional tracks spanning the globe and amongst it all are a large variety of aspirational vehicles that include the Ford GT, Aston Martin Vanquish, Jaguar XKR and AMG-Mercedes CLK.

Xbox owners are also quick to claim that their console is capable of higher resolution graphics – despite the fact that games like EA's *Need for Speed* have already shown that the PS2 can pump out superior visuals. According to Raeburn, this will also be the case when it comes to V8 Supercars 2. "We've managed to squeeze everything we did graphically on the Xbox onto the PS2 by completely rewriting our generic middleware graphics engine with our own engine specifically written for the job in hand. Compared to V8 Supercars 1 we can now draw three to four times the number of polys in V8 Supercars 2. This allows us to draw everything we could in the Xbox version of the game and lets us add a few extra features, such as volumetric shadows, multi-pass texturing, metallic car paint, high resolution Fresnel reflections all at a smooth 60 frames per second with 21 cars on track. We also have an infinite draw distance now, so pop-up is a thing of the past. As for numbers, our cars are made of roughly 6,000 polygons and our tracks are made of roughly 70,000 polygons."

Based on this, V8 Supercars 2 will be a formidable new racer when it arrives this September. And while we're trying not to get too ahead of ourselves here at OPS2 Towers, it seems that Raeburn and his team ALREADY have a lot in store for other racers down the ahem... track. "There are so many exciting motor sports out there that we could include in our game, it really is difficult to see how we could run out of ideas for sequels!" Wow. **DRY**

MOVIE MURMURS

The latest news and rumours in the world of film and DVD

• **ALTHOUGH CASTING HAS YET TO BE FINALISED**, director Uwe Boll is about to begin a movie adaptation of *BloodRayne*. The blood sucking, tight leather wearing vixen has had little trouble nudging Lara Croft aside to become the PS2's tastiest hottie. With Jessica Alba, Natalie Portman and Jessica Biel leading the favourites to star as *BloodRayne*, the movie should be able to out-class Angelina Jolie's Lara just as easily as the game did.



"So that's where babies come from..."

• **SPEAKING OF RAINING BLOOD**, if there's one movie that's guaranteed to have buckets of the red stuff flying about it's *Aliens vs. Predator*. The plot sees a team of scientists stumbling upon an Alien hive, and just to make things interesting a group of young Predators have just landed for their coming-of-age hunt. The Predators were expecting to hunt Aliens but they're just as happy to splatter human blood along with the Aliens'.



• **AUSSIE ACTION STAR HUGH JACKMAN** has confirmed he'll return for the upcoming *X-Men 3*. The script has yet to be finalised but director Bryan Singer has revealed that the movie's plot will involve a conflict with "mutants and humans against evolution itself." Don't expect to be mutating any time soon though, because the flick's not due to be released until May 2006.

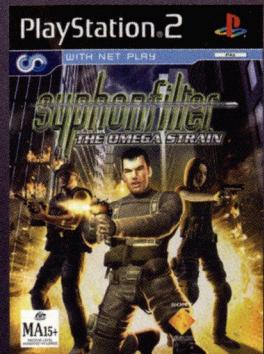


"Maybe don't wear a bra next time..."

• **FANS OF OLD SCHOOL LEGEND WILL FERRELL** will soon be travelling back to the gorgeous '70s with *Anchorman*, a look at the fictional TV anchor Ron Burgundy. The movie centres around Burgundy's struggle to come to terms with the Network's decision to pair him up with the country's first female anchor (Christina Applegate). You need to hit this!



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Calling all agents. You are needed to stop bio-terrorists unleashing this deadly virus. Fight single-handed or team up online to avert a global disaster. www.omega-strain.com

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NETWORK ADAPTOR* & HARDWARE: ONLINE
ARENA GAME WITH EVERY PURCHASE
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PlayStation®2

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CRACKDOWN

NO MORE BAD GAMES

Sub-standard developers pressured to raise their game

There aren't many gamers out there who haven't been suckered into buying at least one poor quality, rushed game based on a movie license. We all know the drill, you've just seen a fantastic action movie in the cinema, then you see the shiny new game box on the shelf boasting "an extension of the storyline with the original cast". You convince yourself it has to be at least decent and you slap you cash on the counter. An hour later the disc sits in your garbage bin in pieces and you're promising yourself 'never again'.

As if in answer to our pleading Warner Bros. has adopted a controversial new policy that will

force videogame developers to pay higher licensing fees if their game isn't up to scratch. By averaging out review scores around the globe Warner Bros deems any game that scores less than 70% to be a poor quality game and charges the developer higher and higher fees, depending on how low it scores. A *Batman* game that scores 75% might only cost \$10 million but a game that receives 40% could cost the developer \$30 million.

Also fed up with crappy licensed games the Olsen Twins, Mary-Kate and Ashley have filed a lawsuit against Acclaim Entertainment alleging the developer has continually



produced poor quality games and effectively 'run the license into the ground'. Is this the beginnings of a new movement that will see Hollywood studios and stars refusing to tolerate crap videogames based on their movies? We sure hope so. **NP**

SPEEDING BULLET

UNDERGROUND 2 GOES REDLINE

You'll be driving faster than you can see



At the time of going to press, we put the squeeze on EA to get the latest tidbits on the highly anticipated *NFS Underground 2*.

The core mechanics of how the game unfolds will take a drastic deviation from the original. *Underground 2* will no longer be menu-driven. In fact, the game is

set to play out in a free-roaming city that an EA spokesperson has described as having "five distinct, interconnected neighbourhoods".

GTA meets *Need for Speed*? Perhaps it's too early to judge, but we do know that alongside the original features, there will be a far greater emphasis on car modifications. Car aesthetics will

also be more varied.

Car nuts can also be happy in the knowledge that EA has also added more than 12 new cars to the roster, taking the total to 35. We're still waiting to hear a confirmed release date for the game but you can bet your pink slips you'll be racing around the streets come Christmas. **RY**

CROSSWORD ANSWERS (SEE PAGE 90)

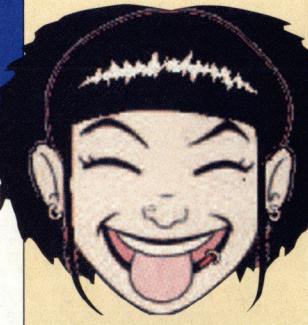
DOWN: 1. Polygon, 2. KillSwitch, 3. Solid, 4. Narayan, 5. Ico, 7. Honour, 8. Twisted, 10. Max, 12. Ash, 14. Speed, 15. SOCOM, 17. Age, 20. Colin McRae, 23. Yoshimitsu, 24. Bandicoot, 25. Emotion, 27. Ubisoft, 30. Belgium, 31. BloodRayne, 33. Rayman, 36. Portable, 37. Races, 39. Wakeboarding, 43. Originality, 45. An, 46. Timesplitters, 47. Rez, 48. Biohazard, 50. Reflections, 54. PSX, 55. Kutaragi, 56. Wolfenstein, 60. One, 62. Duel, 63. Umbrella, 65. The Thing, 66. Rollins, 67. Baby, 72. Blast, 73. Atari, 76. Hole, 77. Late

ACROSS: 6. Onimusha, 8. Turok, 9. Capcom, 11. Nova, 13. Virtua, 14. SEALs, 16. Tao, 18. Gunshot, 19. Ratchet, 21. Neither, 22. Sky, 26. Mud, 28. Alm, 29. Club, 32. Sin, 33. Rash, 34. Ollie, 35. Zane, 37. Rhino, 38. Combo, 40. Lara Croft, 41. Anna, 42. Burnout, 44. Rat, 46. Transformers, 49. Airborne, 51. Germany, 52. Zin, 53. Viper, 56. Wind, 57. Axe, 58. Barrel, 59. PlayStation, 61. Mercedes, 64. Grand Theft Auto, 65. Team, 68. Joust, 69. Airblade, 70. Cry, 71. Stab, 74. Blister, 75. Silent Hill, 78. Heal, 79. Kya, 80. Splinter, 81. Tony Hawk, 82. Sequel

PSI-Ops
THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY

**YOUR MIND
IS THE
ULTIMATE
WEAPON.**

**PYROKINESIS****TELEKINESIS**



STARR REPORT



THE GAME IS GREENER

I like stuff. I like toys and posters and crazy little commemorative spoons and figurines. I like exclusive postcards that I can frame and hang on my walls and little charms I can hang off my backpack. My house resembles a packrat's den, but I know I'm not the only one.

What I like even better is when you can buy special boxed editions of games that come with all kinds of crazy stuff. That way I can satisfy my gaming needs and get some neat useless stuff at the same time. Well, neat postcard sets, anyway. It seems that in other regions of the world (namely Japan), there are some absolutely insane limited edition gizmos that can be picked up.

The biggest that I know of recently is the Onimusha Hori Katana Soul Controller that was released simultaneously (but not packaged with the actual game) with *Onimusha 3* in Japan and the US. It has all the buttons and analog sticks, so you can use it as a normal Dual Shock, but it also features motion sensors, so that you can attack by swinging it like a sword. (For those of you who have some spare cash lying around, I've seen it in shops in Chinatown Sydney for a mere \$250).

Nifty controllers are all well and good, but not **TOTALLY** useless. The *Dynasty Warriors* games limited edition sets in Japan, for instance, came with action figures, poker cards, postcards, artbooks, and drama CDs. There's a game called *Primopuel* for which you can obtain a controller in the shape of a fluffy toy. *Castlevania: Lament of Innocence* fans got official art cards, a calendar and a music CD. There's a game called *Popolocrois Hajimari no Bouken* that came with little toys and a hankie. *The Anubis: Zone of the Enders* special edition didn't come with any actual stuff, but there were extra missions to be played, and brand new stages.

Hell - I'd settle for memory cards with incomprehensible cartoon characters emblazoned on the front or a pink *Hello Kitty* PS2 like the Dreamcast that the Japanese could get for a while there. I'm not asking much - Just a little acknowledgement that I'm fully capable of being just as insane as the rest of the world.

Michelle Starr
Games Writer

loading...

WATCH OUT

PS2 STILL GOING STRONG

SCE slams rumours that PS2 sales have peaked

Despite the PlayStation 2 being the clear market leader, rumours have been circulating that Sony's popular console has peaked a lot earlier than the PSOne and that it will not continue to sell strongly for as long as Sony's last machine did. Clearly angry with the media's spin on the issue, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe president David Reeves responded by saying "We get many headlines in the media saying that PlayStation 2 has peaked. It's bullshit - it has not peaked! We're only halfway through the life cycle."

With 22.5 million PS2 consoles already sold in PAL

territories (that includes Europe, Australia, New Zealand and more) Reeves expects that number to hit 45 million by 2008.

Reeves also pointed out that the PlayStation 2 has yet to reach its "magic price point", at which point mainstream consumers become interested and sales begin to increase dramatically. For PSOne this price point was \$199. Although Reeves would not comment on a likely date for this price drop, we'd be very surprised if this wasn't the PS2's sticker price this Christmas. **JP** **NP**



GET SNEAKY

YOU'VE BEEN CONNED!

Sly and his crew return for a new heist



Sly Raccoon was one of 2002's shining lights, but it went largely unnoticed. *Sly 2: Band of Thieves* will make a much bigger splash with its ability to use three playable characters. Apart from sneaky Sly himself, you'll also be able to take control of other members of Sly's crew. Bentley (brainy) and Murray (muscly) will work as a team as

they embark on an adventure full of deceit, twists and even romance! The same stylish visuals will be in place, and the environments will be bigger and offer a lot more freedom.

Scampering across rooftops, bypassing alarms, picking pockets, combat, disguises and using gadgets will be the order of the day. We're confident *Sly 2* will outshine even the brilliance of the original. **JP** **RY**



See, cool game characters don't need to be slim

the top ten

THINGS WE WANT IN SAN ANDREAS

1. PRIVATE JETS

With an entire state on offer, driving everywhere would be as boring as driving from one side of the map to the other in *True Crime*. With our own jets we could nip between cities in a flash. Oh, and please let us land the planes on any street. Thanks.

2. BETTER GIRLFRIENDS

Maria deserved that bullet at the end of *GTA3* and Mercedes wasn't much better in *Vice City* - we would have been much happier with a piece of Candy. Don't give us another skanky ho' in *San Andreas* - we're begging you.

3. HEAT-SEEKING ROCKETS

We've had rocket launchers for a couple of games now, why not up the ante and give us heat-seeking rockets that will chase police choppers down for us?

4. SKYDIVING

If the game's going to have jets, why not give us a parachute and let us hop out mid-flight and skydive down to a location of our choice. It'd be the ultimate way to bust into enemy territory with Uzi's blasting.

5. DUAL STICK AIMING

Driv3r shows us how well this can work within the genre. Please Rockstar, ditch the lock-on aiming system and let us target the gun ourselves.

6. SKATEBOARDS

With the latest *Tony Hawk* games trying to copy *Grand Theft Auto*, why not just copy it back and let us pull tricks on a skateboard while cruising the streets. Skateboard drive-bys are a must also.

7. ALIENS

If we're going to be cruising the skies over the Californian desert, why not include the odd UFO sighting. There could even be a couple of missions where you have to fight them.

8. SUBMARINES

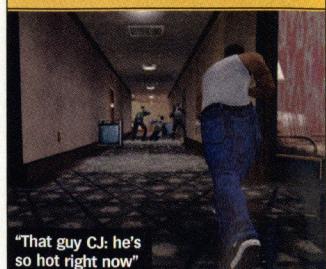
Maybe we're getting a little carried away here but we can't help but think the *GTA* series already offers up so many vehicles that you have to be a little imaginative. If an enemy mob's giving you trouble just hop in your sub and send a few missiles their way.

9. HILARIOUS RADIO STATIONS

The radio stations in *Vice City* were fantastic as far as music went but when it came to comedy they weren't a patch on the *GTA3*'s stations. We want a return to form for *San Andreas*.

10. GIVING ORDERS

We're not asking for anything complex or fiddly but if you could play missions with fellow crims and give them simple orders like "attack" and "defend", we reckon that'd be tops.



"That guy CJ: he's so hot right now"

SNAKE GOES RPG

Disappointing revelations for MGS fans

Hideo Kojima has said his PSP game *Metal Gear Acid* will be a strategy game rather than an action game. Kojima believes that his stealth games require precise controls. A single mistake can get you spotted and end the game. Because of the slightly simplified PSP controls (one small analogue stick and a directional pad, plus four face and two shoulder buttons) Kojima felt that a strategy game would work better than a

traditional action game. Although it looks identical to *MGS2*, clashes with enemies are all about hit points and selecting attacks.

The strange direction for *Acid* doesn't diminish our anticipation for the PSP, because the fact that no other developer has had any trouble adapting their PS2 games means that Kojima's worries about the PSP's controls seem to be nothing but a bizarre quirk of his. **NP**



VOTE

FOR THE

GREATEST PS2 GAMES EVER!

In Issue 27 we revealed what we think are the 101 greatest PS2 games, but we aren't the people who really matter – you are! That's why we're currently compiling the ultimate list of the greatest games ever, as voted for by you.

What games have had the biggest impact on your life? What game has made you stay up all night playing because it was so addictive? What game do you always get out when your mates come over? Think about all these things and come up with your own personal TOP FIVE PS2 games ever.

You can either fill, then cut out this form and send it to **Greatest Games, OPS2 Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355**, or simply put all the info into an email and fire it off to ops2@derwenthoward.com.au with 'Greatest Games' as the subject. We'll be compiling everyone's entries together and using a room full of advanced supercomputers to calculate the ultimate list of the best ever PS2 games. So get voting! **NP**

Dear OPS2, I RECKON THESE ARE THE **BEST** PLAYSTATION 2 GAMES EVER:

1. _____

Why: _____

2. _____

Why: _____

3. _____

Why: _____

4. _____

Why: _____

5. _____

Why: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

**YOUR MIND
IS THE
ULTIMATE
WEAPON.**



Mind Drain



Mind Control



Remote Vision



HAUNTED MAGAZINE WINNERS

Thanks for all the 'Haunted Magazine' entries that flooded in for the competition in issue #28. Most people correctly spotted him in the top left image on page 67 (*Onimusha Blade Warriors* review) but a few let their imagination go wild and thought they saw him as one of the pedestrians on page 26 (*Destroy all Humans*) and in the shadows on page 21 (*Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow*). Here are the lucky winners: R Roberts SA, D Griffin Vic, J Kuprys SA, S Eyles NZ, K Cameron NSW, M Cole Qld, M Hlavca Vic, D Smit NSW, S McKinnon Tas, F Hawk SA.



MCRAE STILL RACING

Despite recently announcing his retirement from the rally circuit, Colin McRae has again lent his name to Codemasters' rally games. *Colin McRae 2005* will get the updates and expanded features list as expected. Here's what we know it'll have: 23 events, 300+ stages, 8-player online, non-linear career challenge, 30+ cars, 9 international locations and new damage physics which will now be able to track even mere scrapes to your panels. We're mainly looking forward to the online aspect of the game, so hopefully you'll soon have the chance of beating and claiming the scalps of some OPS2 staffers!



THIRD TIME'S A CHARM

The third version of Capcom's third *StreetFighter* game, *StreetFighter III: Third Strike* will soon be dragon-punching its way onto PS2. For those not in the know, *Third Strike* is the most hardcore *StreetFighter* game of them all and is still played by fans today. Previously the only home version of the game was on Dreamcast but now that it's coming to PS2 the brawler is bound to find an even bigger following.

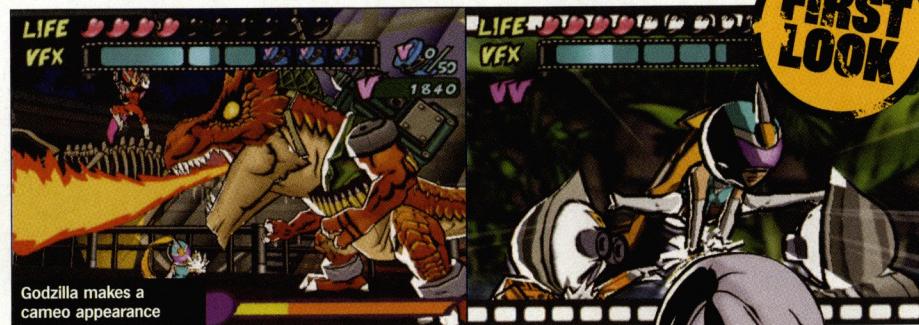
A WHOLE NEW CAN OF WORMS
After last year's *Worms 3D*, Team 17 has busily worked away on a huge new sequel that will mark the biggest evolution for the series since it made the jump into 3D. Instead of straight worm-on-worm combat *Worms Fort: Under Siege* lets players construct huge weapons and manufacturing plants to increase the power of their worm army. Visually the game looks very similar to its prequel but the 30 new weapons, the ability to construct offensive and defensive items and the deeper single player campaign will take the *Worms* in a whole new direction.

loading...

COMIC POTENTIAL

TWO JOES ARE BETTER THAN ONE

THQ brings *Viewtiful Joe 1* and *2* to PS2



Previously *Viewtiful Joe* was a GameCube exclusive but we'll soon be playing improved versions of both *Viewtiful* games. *Viewtiful Joe* is an old school-style scrolling beat 'em up that uses flash cel-shaded graphics to rejuvenate the aging genre.

Players have a variety of combos with which to bash the bollocks out of the enemies, as well as cool dodges and the ability to slow down and speed up time to devastating effects. The original game in its entirety will arrive on PS2 with the added bonus of a new playable

character – Capcom's king of cool, Dante.

As soon as you've finished the first game you'll be able to get your knuckle dusters cracking again with *Viewtiful Joe 2*. As well as everything being obviously bigger and better, the main drawcard for the sequel is the ability to play as Joe's sister Silvia. Packing all the punch of a college cheerleader, Silvia can belt enemies up close with her pom-poms (we're not kidding) or dish out projectiles for nasty ranged attacks. **NP**



KRI-ING GAME

KRI MARKED FOR SEQUEL

Sony releases *Rise of Kasai* on gamers

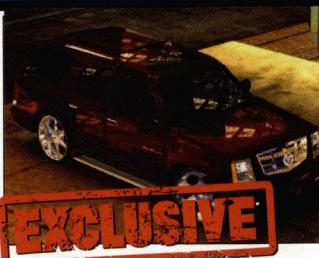


Remember *The Mark of Kri*? Probably not considering its lacklustre sales but with its time travelling plot, sibling rivalry and more weapons-based combat than *Soul Calibur 2*, its sequel, *Rise of Kasai*, will offer something for every beat 'em up fan.

Our man Tau is still the same legendary warrior, except that he's dead. Living in the aftermath of her brother's death Tati is nothing like the innocent girl we remember in this game (set ten

years after the original).

Both characters are playable in the game (Tati in the future and Tau ten years before he gets killed) but their fighting styles are as different as possible. Tati uses stealth, aided by her ability to turn invisible, to sneak up on enemies and literally stab them in the back, before using her twin blades to commit all sorts of nasty bloodletting. Tau, on the other hand, fights with complete honour, relying on his brute strength prevail. **NP**



EXCLUSIVE

COOLER CLUB

True to form, Rockstar has been secretive about details on *Midnight Club: Dub Edition*. Notice its new name? *Dub Edition* is the third in the series but Rockstar has teamed up with the US's *Dub* magazine, who is acting as creative consultants. *Dub's* about customisation, customisation, customisation! The team behind it hope that a real online community will develop and with virtually limitless options, racers will be instantly recognisable from their rides – just like in real life. We're waiting in anticipation to see what goes down on the streets when it's released against EA's hot-looking *Need for Speed Underground 2*. **RY**

MORE SPIDER-MAN

Just as *Spider-Man 2* hits silver screens and its official game lands in PS2s everywhere, Activision has announced it will follow up with not only *Spider-Man 3* but also the tentatively titled *Spider-Man Classic*.

It's *Spider-Man Classic* which holds more interest to us, and fans of the comic. While *Spider-Man 3* will release with the third movie sometime around May 2007, it's likely *Classic* will be finished before then. It will be based on more historic elements and will be focussed primarily on the comic book. **RY**



SIM-ULATION

THE SIMS GET HIP

It's like the old *Sims* but cooler

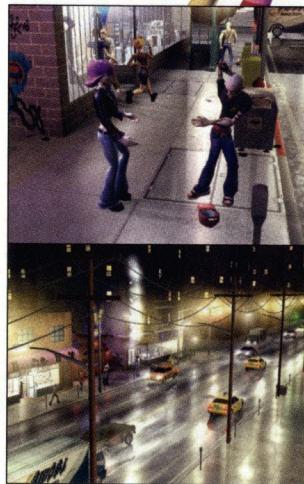
EA is giving one of its biggest series major surgery. *The Sims* – made famous for putting gamers into a virtual world is widely regarded as being somewhat clean and surgical in its approach. *The Urbz: Sims in the City* is the working title for the series' next instalment and is set to be its biggest departure yet.

The Urbz will remove the characters from the classic environments that millions of gamers around the world have come to know. Instead, the game will now take place across 9 distinct districts (with bonus locations) where you will be able to work, live, shop and play. The game will focus

on having the player build their street "cred" and reputation.

There will also be loads of mini-games included, which they will take place deeper into the game after you have learnt new skills from your boss and people around you. OPS2 is also able to confirm that walking into stores and buying products will play a significant part of the game and the game will be EyeToy compatible – allowing you to place your image on billboards throughout the environments.

EA says that gamers will experience a 24/7 lifestyle and that *The Urbz* will feature a cool visual style and hip urban attitude. OPS2 will have more news soon! **RY**

**RING LEADER**

FOUR ON THE FLOOR

Not content with three, EA plans a fourth *Rings* game

There were three books, there were three movies and you thought EA was releasing three games... But no! EA has taken it upon themselves to release a fourth game.

The series' third game *The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age*

was recently on show at E3 and is set to be an RPG. However, we hear on good advice that EA is able to exercise rights in their contracts with New Line/Tolkien that doesn't limit them to basing games only on the movies. Very little is known, but it is rumoured

that the game is simply being referred to as *Lord of the Rings (2005)* and EA's Redwood Shores will be responsible for development. We also hear it will have a heavy orientation towards action, not unlike *The Return of the King*. **RY**

THE X-MAN

X-FILES GIVEAWAY

Find Doggett and win!

Time to give your eyes another work-out. This month, Mulder's replacement Agent John Doggett (pictured right) has given Scully the slip and hidden himself somewhere in the magazine. To celebrate the release of the nail-biting *X-Files* Season 9 on July 28, 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment has kindly given us two whopping great collection packs of *X-Files* Seasons 1-9 (valued at over \$500 each). To be in the running to win one of these collection packs you just need to scan through the mag and find the other hidden version of Agent Doggett and let us know where he is. He'll be hidden somewhere else in the magazine, so please don't write in and say the one on this page! Happy hunting. **NP**

WIN!



HOW TO ENTER – Send entries to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with "X-Files Giveaway" in the subject line, enter on our website www.derwenthoward.com.au or send envelopes via snail mail to: OPS2 Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355. Email entrants are entitled to one email per competition only. Entries should be clearly marked and include: The name of the competition, your name, age, email address, phone number (mobile also) and address. All competitions close 11 August, 2004. This comp is also open to NZ residents.



"One of our most wanted games of 2004"

-IGN

"Psi-Ops: The Mindgate Conspiracy brings some literally mind-blowing new elements to action adventure gaming."

- AUSTRALIAN OPSM

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PS2 TOP 10 GAMES CHART

1



HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER AZKABAN proves that you can't keep a good wizard down. We're sure it's great but if Ed doesn't shut up about how it's the best movie ever, we'll shove his spellbook where the sun doesn't shine!

2



SINGSTAR storms into the charts, repeating the success of Sony's last innovative title (*EyeToy*). We still get to gyrate around in front of the TV looking like idiots but now we get to do it with a microphone. It's genius.

3



GRAN TURISMO 4: PROLOGUE slides smoothly into third position. The king of the road is still six months away but anticipation is so high for this baby that even in this trimmed down form it still outsold a bunch of hot new games!

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	DISTRIBUTOR
4.	EyeToy: Play	Party	Sony
5.	The Simpsons Hit & Run	Adventure	Vivendi
6.	Shrek 2	Action	Activision
7.	Need for Speed Underground	Racing	EA
8.	AFL Live Premiership Edition	Sports	Acclaim
9.	Transformers	Adventure	Atari
10.	Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow	Adventure	Ubisoft

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE

JULY

Athens 2004	Sports	Sony
Combat Elite: WWII Paratroopers	Shooter	Acclaim
Formula One 2004	Racing	Sony
Onimusha 3: Demon Siege	Adventure	THQ
Richard Burns Rally	Racing	Atari
Shellshock: Nam '67	Shooter	Atari
X-Files: Resist Or Serve	Horror	Vivendi

AUGUST

Catwoman	Action	EA
Crimson Tears	Action/RPG	THQ
Headhunter Redemption	Adventure	Atari
Karaoke Stage	Adventure	Atari

SEPTEMBER

Ace Combat 5	Shooter	Sony
Juiced	Racing	Acclaim
Red Star	Shooter	Acclaim
Second Sight	Adventure	Atari
Silent Hill 4: The Room	Horror	Atari
Sly 2	Platformer	Sony
Star Wars Battlefront	Shooter	EA
Terminator: Redemption	Shooter	Atari
Worms Forts: Under Siege	Strategy	Atari

OCTOBER

100 Bullets	Shooter	Acclaim
Burnout 3	Racing	EA
Grand Theft Auto San Andreas	Adventure	Take 2
Jak 3	Adventure	Sony
Prince of Persia 2	Platformer	Ubisoft
Ratchet & Clank: Up Your Arsenal	Shooter	Sony
Resident Evil: Outbreak	Horror	THQ
Silent Hill 4	Horror	Atari

NOVEMBER

Battlefield: Modern Combat	Shooter	EA
Conflict: Vietnam	Shooter	Atari
Death by Degrees	Fighting	Sony
Devil May Cry 3	Action	THQ
GoldenEye: Rogue Agent	Adventure	EA
Gran Turismo 4	Racing	Sony
Killzone	Shooter	Sony
Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater	Adventure	Atari
Midnight Club: Dub Edition	Racing	Take 2
Need for Speed Underground 2	Racing	EA
Playboy: The Mansion	Strategy	Ubisoft
Starcraft: Ghost	Adventure	Vivendi



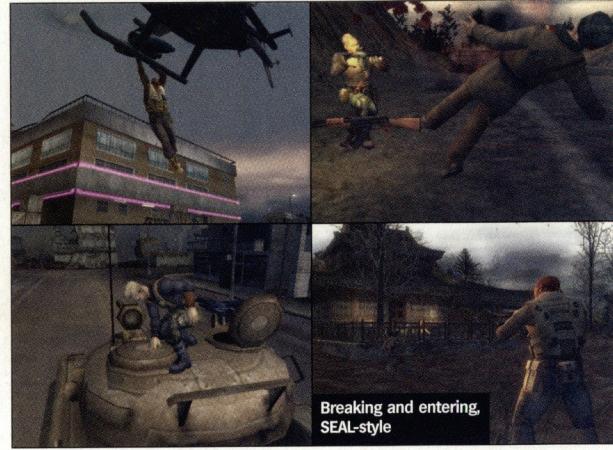
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MAKING WAR FUN

PANDEMIC'S NEW SHOOTER STUNS

Popular studio tackles Korean war

From the quirky alien abductions in *Destroy all Humans!* to explosive Korean war zones in *Mercenaries*, Pandemic Studios has proven itself to be one of the most innovative developers to surface in recent years. Rather than doing a dull period war sim about one of Korea's earlier conflicts, Pandemic has set *Mercenaries* during a fictional coup, where a private army has assumed control of the troubled country. Controlling one of three mercenaries, players will be challenged with the task of tracking down and eliminating the 52 members of the hardliner regime. What sets



Breaking and entering, SEAL-style

Mercenaries apart from all of the other third-person action games is its completely open and interactive approach. Your targets will be located in huge, open levels, giving you the choice to choose your own path through the city. Even better, every weapon an enemy drops can be picked up and used, and every vehicles you stumble

across can be driven, or just blown up. With more than 30 weapons, 20 vehicles including tanks, helicopters and jeeps (and the ability to call in airstrikes) each mission can be played out in an almost limitless number of ways, making this the most free-flowing shooter we've seen. Keep your crosshairs trained on this one. **NP**

BABY GOT A GUN

PREPARE YOUR FOREARMS FOR CRISIS ZONE

Time Crisis meets John Woo! Now that's gotta be cool!

Crisis Zone is the latest shooter from the G-Con masters at Namco. While many will regard it as "just the next *Time Crisis* game," there is a subtle new addition that is bound to make a few new waves in the gameplay department. *Crisis Zone* will feature double gun gameplay, so you're now able to make both arms sore at the same time! But seriously... this should add a new dimension to *Time Crisis* and allow you to take down enemies in a blaze of hot lead with the

afore-mentioned John Woo-style!

The game will also feature a more interactive environment than has previously been seen in earlier games from the series. Bullets will shatter glass, damage doors, walls and even metal in each of the hyper-detailed levels. To extend the game's appeal into the stratosphere, Namco will include extra play modes, special settings and new enemies to unlock. There's no blastin' like *Time Crisis* blastin'! We'll be gathering ammo for a big preview in the coming months. **RY**

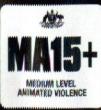


UNDER-COVER DRIVER THE UP



"BEING ON THE STREET IS ONE THING...
UNDERSTANDING IT IS MY THING."
-TOBIAS JONES

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PlayStation®2



REFLECTIONS

feedback

We spend the whole magazine talking to you – now it's your turn!

SPEAK TO US!

Come on, we know you guys are bursting to get involved. Share your thoughts with the nation's PlayStation 2 owners in the new, improved Feedback section and you could win an exclusive Atari T-shirt and game! Write to us on paper or on a computer:

OPS2 Feedback
Derwent Howard
PO Box 1037
Bondi Junction, NSW 1355

Email: ops2@derwenthoward.com.au



OPS2 chart

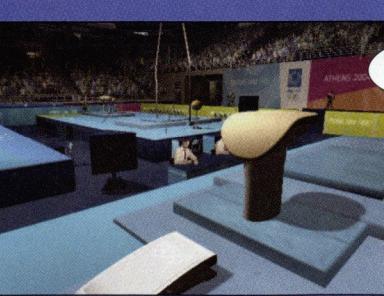
Some games mags are written by people who don't really play games, but not OPS2 – we play games so much here that we hardly have time to make the mag! Here's what's been making us late this month.



WE'VE BEEN PLAYING...

1. SINGSTAR

While we've all been too scared to play the game in the office in front of each other, we've all been hammering *SingStar* at home. Fantastic late-night party fun!



2. ATHENS 2004

We've had a few excellent battles on *Athens 2004*, with some intense rivalries building up on certain events. Playing with the dance mats nearly killed us though. That's our exercise for the month.

3. DRIV3R

We spent the first hour all complaining about how crap it was, but a few levels in it became the best "one attempt, then pass the pad on" multiplayer games of recent months.

RESPONSIBLE ADULT

Hey OPS2 and everyone else, Being recently laid off from work I found myself facing a big decision. I can take this huge payout the bosses gave me and have a bit of a holiday at home for a while and have a heap of fun... or I can make the most of capitalising on the significant contribution by my boss and find a job quick-smart to add more and more income to it ASAP. So what did I do? The same thing any young male with half a brain would do, I had a holiday at home for a while to catch up on some much-needed PS2 playing which I was deprived of while working my 60-hour weeks as a Car Salesman (the

non-con-artist type). These long weeks meant I only really kept a small game collection due to my lack of time to play. So I went out and tried to rent all the new games everyday and see what they were like so I might con the Mrs into buying them for me. Browsing the shop my first target was *Need For Speed: Underground* because since I played the demo I wanted to try the full version before I bought. The problem? No one stocks enough copies for it to be available... EVER! So there was *Fight Night 2004*... yeah, heard of this one, I'll give it a go... [blah blah blah]... now I am a HUGE Rocky fan and own the DVD box set and love the game... [blah blah blah]... how often is it that we hear people whinge because "that game isn't realistic enough"? Good! That's what I say

— I play games because they are games and get you away from reality... [blah blah blah]... if you were able to change the camera view for *FN2004* to see through the eyes of your fighter, you would get destroyed. Why? Because you don't have peripheral vision, you can't see below your eye line without turning your head and bam, hit over the top... [blah blah blah]... leave games the way they are and keep your magazine the



Many websites are claiming this is the PlayStation 3. Could they be true?

way it is because it rocks... [blah blah blah]... I am in desperate need of a new game for my collection... [blah blah blah]... Cheers.

Scott Brandis, Gladstone, Qld

Yeah, cheers Scott. Sorry, we skip-read part of your letter because you were banging on a bit. You sound like you've got a lot of time on your hands — maybe you should get a job to occupy yourself or something?

MY MATE SAYS...

I know that you guys said "please no more questions about PS3", but from what I have heard, some say that PS3 is going to come out at around 2006 and it comes out on a BRD (blue ray disk). So if this is true... DUDE, the next PS will rock!

Raphael, via email

Dude! You didn't listen to us when we said "please no more questions about PS3", did you? There are loads of rumours floating around about Sony's next home console, but as the company actually creating the machine [Sony] hasn't said anything definite yet, you might as well just ignore everything you hear and carry on enjoying your PS2 – as soon as anything is made

ANIME SANCTUARY

As some of your readers might know from my previous letters I'm a big fan of Japanese anime, and especially anime games. However, I'm disappointed with the variety of anime-based games on PAL, or rather lack thereof.

Obviously, the reason for games like *Dragonball Z* and *Robotech* were released on PAL is 'cause they are considered "mainstream", which means PAL gamers only buy games if they're the "in thing". It's pathetic that we're from a society that chooses what it likes based on other people's tastes. But for the many gamers who like anime and want to play anime games we were unfortunately born into the wrong society... Or should I say region? It's no secret that we are on the PAL system, otherwise known as the European system, and that most anime games are on NTSC (USA/Japan). So why is it that Australia was put on the PAL system? I mean, Australia has more in common with the USA than it does Europe. So why are anime fans forced to miss out on quality games just 'cause they're anime-based? The answer? Europe doesn't like anime — you could say they hate it. I hope that with the release of the PS3, they make it multi-region so anime fans like myself can enjoy these quality games, or will distributors listen to the gamers and start releasing these games on PAL?

Iceburg, via email



Okay, to answer your first question, Sony didn't 'put' Australia on the PAL system — all TVs in Australia use PAL, which means they run at a certain frequency and resolution. In order for a games console to work on Australian TVs, it has to be PAL compatible. It's nothing to do with game companies, and it doesn't directly affect which titles get released in Australia. As for 'why don't many anime games come out in Australia?' this is simply because anime isn't all that popular here. In Japan there are also huge amounts of horse racing games released which never make it over here, while loads of the first-person shooters that we see in Oz never make it over there. Releases simply vary from country to country, based on gamers' tastes. However, with anime such as *Dragonball Z* and *Robotech* becoming popular locally, it's only going to serve as an introduction to a whole new generation of anime fans and, in time, this will mean more companies will release more anime games.



cuttings

Little bits of leftover letters that we found on the floor

Very Daft

Sony has been criticised by some stupid people for holding onto old technology, such as the MiniDiscs in PS2s. Unfortunately I have to agree with them.

Ben, Adelaide

Surely that means you're even stupider?

Boxtastic!

I love your mag, and I really like the Reality Bites feature on page 38. Oh, and thanks for the walkthrough to *SOCOM II: US Navy SEALs*. the online tactics helped me heaps! Must kill more.

Andrew Hamilton, via email

Yeah, that photo of Naz with a box on his head makes us laugh every time.

We Want More Cars!

Will the new Peugeot 307 WRC/CC [which won the rally of Cyprus last month], the Peugeot 607 [as used as security vehicles at the Royal wedding in Denmark] and the new Peugeot 407, due for release later this year feature in the full version of *Gran Turismo 4*?

Nat, via email

We'll print the full GT4 car list in OPS2 very soon.

So Long, Future Boy!

G'day everyone! Your magazine rocks! I don't get your mag every week but when I do... IT'S MAD! Thanks OPS2. C'ya round.

Mike, via email

PS: Issue 33 is mad!

Thanks for telling us that issue 33 is mad, Mike - we won't even be making it for two months yet, so it's good to know from a time-traveller such as yourself that we'll be doing a good job in the future!

We Love You Too!

Hello gamers, I am just writing to you to tell you that your mag is the best and is the only mag that isn't boring.

Ashley Camac, via email

Thanks for the kind words but don't get too far because Richie's head already has its own postcode.

official, you'll hear about it first in OPS2. And you can guarantee that anything we print is true, unlike these rumours from someone who says "my brother's girlfriend's dad knows a bloke down the pub whose son's flatmate works at Sony, and he said..."

CAREER ADVICE

To the OPS2 Towers That Reach To Heaven, How do you get such a good job? Do you have to have a degree in entertainment or something like that?

Michael, via email

Yeah, we studied for 10 years each at a special 'entertainment university' where we all had to play videogames, watch funny movies, make up jokes, wear silly hats, eat jelly and ice cream and have food fights 24 hours a day! Richie is a Professor of Fart Jokes, Naz holds a PhD in Giggling, and Ed was recently knighted to become 'Sir Ed of the Realm of Having Lots of Fun'.

YOUR WISH IS OUR COMMAND

Hey OPS2,

First up please excuse any mistakes. I didn't pay much attention in school - I was playing PS2 too much! Anyways, I will do the standard ass-kiss: your mag is the best out there. I have brought the crappy UK ones but they don't provide any real info unless it's about some crap soccer game, but you guys (and girl) give us what we need to know and that makes you SIIIIIIIIIIIIIIICKKKKKK!

Yeah, anyway, during my net sessions I have not been able to

No more crap Spawn games



It helps if you stand 'behind' the cover guys

find much information on *Killzone* — for a game that's meant to be a *Halo*-killer (not that that's very hard) there is a surprising lack of info on it. From the screens I have seen it looks extremely good. That's where you come in. Can you please run an article on it or at least the storyline and chuck in a few screens please?

Drew C, via email

When it comes to huge games such as *Killzone*, you know there's only one place you'll get to read about it first, and that's OPS2! You've no doubt noticed by now that we've got a massive exclusive feature on the game in this very issue, and will be bringing you many more world-firsts on hot up and coming titles in the months to come. Are we good to you or what?

DEMO DISCUSSION

Just like to share with you my thoughts on your demo discs. It's a great incentive to buy your magazine, but am I the only one who finds the 'timed' trials a big turn-off? The one thing that will get me buying a game is if I am already hooked on the idea of having a copy. I am forever checking the games my mates have and having a good go at them to see if it is worth a purchase. So I am always interested in checking out what is on any demo disc I get. But I find that after a few minutes or so playing a 'trial' game, being thrown back to the main menu really turns me off.

As it so happens, I have never bought a game that I was so rudely interrupted during a demo, but with the 'trials' that let me really have a good go, I get hooked, and just have to go out and buy the game. I'm sure developers have their reasons, but all I see is that they are being tightasses, and I don't think it reflects too well on your wonderful magazine either. Well, that's how I see it anyway. Keep up the good work.

Keith, via email

Unfortunately, it's up to the developers and Sony to decide how much of their games you guys get to play on our demo DVDs — obviously, we'd let you play forever if we could.

READERS

most wanted

The votes for the Readers' Most Wanted chart have been flooding in, and we proudly present the first top 5 list of what the nation's PS2 gamers are most looking forward to playing. Don't forget to vote every month so that we can keep the list up-to-date and make sure we cover the games that you guys are dying to get your hands on.

Send an email to ops2@derwenthoward.com.au, with 'Most Wanted' as the subject, and list the top five upcoming PlayStation 2 games you're most looking forward to. Tell us why you're excited too, and we might print your rantings with your most anticipated title.



1. KILLZONE (NEW ENTRY)

"It looks incredible, and I can't wait to play it online! 12-player Killzone deathmatches? Yes please!"

Brendan Fisher, Port Augusta, SA



2. DRIV3R (NEW ENTRY)

"This looks to me like it could be a Grand Theft Auto-beater! And that's saying something, cos I'm the biggest Vice City fan in the world!"

Asam, Brisbane, QLD



2. MGS3: SNAKE EATER (NEW ENTRY)

"I like the idea of having to catch your food, and that brick-patterned camouflage outfit looks sweet!"

Gavin, via email

NEW PICS & INFO

PLAYERS: 1

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY

DEVELOPER: SONY LONDON STUDIO

WEBSITE: WWW.THEGETAWAY2.CO.UK

LAST SEEN: OPS2#24

RELEASE DATE: LATE 2004

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

60%

THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY
is aiming to build on the promise of the original while also ironing out the frustrations.



GET YOUR BIKE ON

It seems to be a rule in any game that involves a substantial amount of driving that the addition of motorbikes kicks things up a gear. Literally. We couldn't be more delighted that *Black Monday* has the two-wheeled machines to use, because, frankly, the realistic stuck-in-traffic physics of the first game did, on occasion, grate very much. Whether or not the bikes will handle as sweetly as the ones in *GTA: Vice City* remains to be seen. Either way, we're waiting... impatiently...



Some hero... sitting down on the job



X ACTION/ADVENTURE

THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY

Right you lot, let's get the bangers and mash back on the frog and toad with the Muppets and, erm... so forth

The original *Getaway* is one of those titles that can be as much of a beaut adventure as it can a gamer's nightmare. One second you might be happily blasting thugs and hooligans with your shotgun as you creep through drug dens and dark alleys. The next, however, you'll likely be back on the roads to do one of the many driving sections. Oh and how the driving sections irk. This was made all the more frustrating as the game arrived in a time when we were experiencing the sheer vehicular bliss that is *GTA3*.

You see, *The Getaway* had a completely accurate map of London. Which is one of the worst cities to drive in – ever! High-speed chases where traffic cones would send you spinning out of control, smacking into some hat-clad Volvo driver, caused many a hurled joypad. But props had to be given to the developer for such an ambitious project. Almost as soon as the first one was released, talk of a sequel began. And we've been lucky enough to get a work-in-progress gander at it.

The game is titled *The Getaway: Black Monday*, which should probably clue

canny gamers into a few things. Whenever the mighty colon is brought out in favour of a number or Roman numeral, it's a fair bet that the sequel has only a tentative link with the original game.

Certainly, that is the case with *TG:MB*. This time, you will play as one of three characters. One is Sgt. Ben Mitchell, who is your standard cop-with-a-dark-past. Accused of shooting a kid in the back, his friends and colleagues now treat him like Jar Jar Binks merchandise, and it's his mission to prove himself worthy once more. The other main lead is Eddie O'Connor, a former boxer and general hard man who finds himself involved in a bank job that invariably goes wrong.

Like the plots of the first game's two main characters things are kept fairly separate, but apparently converge a lot more at the end and even influence the outcome based on certain moral choices taken.

The third character is a bit of a mystery, it has to be said. It's a she, linked somehow to Eddie, and her story is said to be more "stealthy". Intriguing, to say the least.

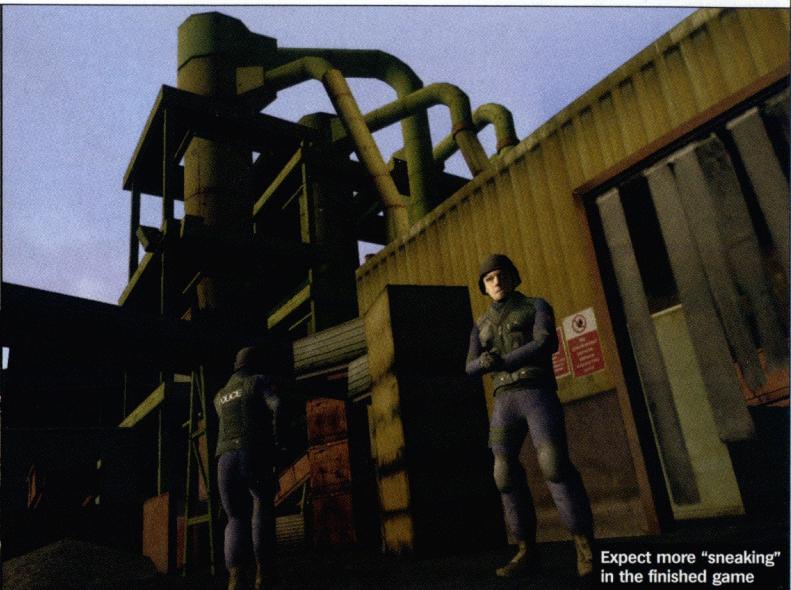
Having only played the game briefly at E3, we can't

really judge the driving sections. Although it has to be said, they look very cool. The traffic moves faster, the cops are smarter and the addition of motorbikes make weaving through London's streets a whole lot easier.

Back, of course, is the gritty cinematic feel of the game. That means there'll be plenty of swearing, gunplay, graphic violence and liberal use of the word "Muppet". Hopefully some of the longer cut-scenes will be skipable this time, but either way we know they're going to look good and fill the void that Guy Ritchie has left ever since he hooked up with Madonna.

The level of depth that comes from an uncertain climax combined with slicker graphics, better driving mechanics and a fresh new story and new locations all leave *Black Monday* looking like something of a belter.

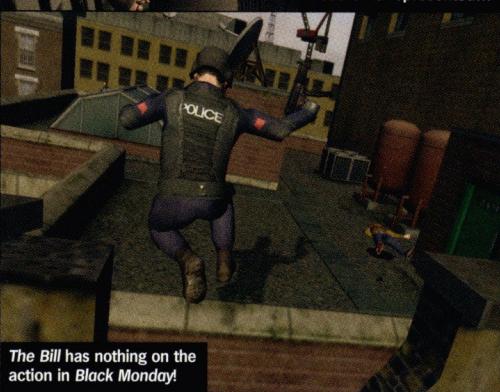
Hopefully the mistakes of the first one will be fixed and this time around it'll be consistent fun filling the gutters of London with blood. One should beware of using the terms "Muppet" and "geezie" too liberally, though. It tends to annoy flatmates and girlfriends. So we're told. 



Expect more "sneaking" in the finished game



Even London's dismal weather is represented...



The Bill has nothing on the action in Black Monday!

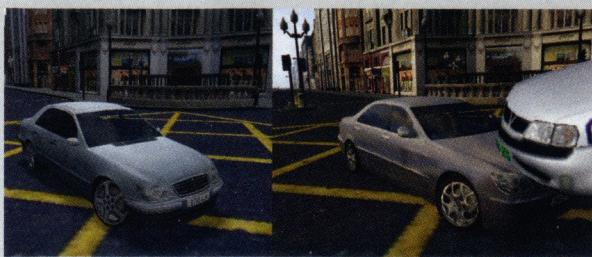


The 4WD suspension is needed to run over pedestrians

CHECK ATT 'IS NEW TOGS!

The *Getaway* was a very impressive game upon release, as it had one of the biggest and most detailed 3D worlds we'd seen. If you've ever had the pleasure of visiting London, you'll realise that it's plain to see how accurately Studio Soho was able to model and map the game's environments.

Now, a couple of years on, it's looking a little scruffy, which is why it's nice to see how the London development team has tidied things up. Almost every aspect of the game has undergone some sort of surgery and the level of detail has been taken to even loftier heights. On a whole, *Black Monday* will be the most cinematic gaming experience that has been seen to date – something that Studio Soho no doubt set out to accomplish. We've compiled these side by side comparisons for you to check out. You can see the subtle, but effective, improvements that have been made to the vehicle models as well as in the backgrounds.



HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1

DISTRIBUTOR: UBISOFT

DEVELOPER: UBISOFT MONTREAL

WEBSITE: WWW.PRINCEOPERSIAGAME.COM

LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK

RELEASE DATE: LATE 2004

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

55%

PRINCE OF PERSIA 2 takes the success of *Sands of Time* and adds a dark, bloody edge. Start setting aside some cash now.

THE BLOODTHIRSTY WARRIOR FORMERLY KNOWN AS PRINCE



After enduring the trials and hardships of the Sands of Time, the Prince is no longer an innocent, fresh-faced boy only looking to impress his father. After battling the supernatural, coming out on top and finally fighting the timelines, the Prince couldn't share the experience with anyone lest they think him a madman. Forced to deal with the tension and denied the glory for his achievements, the Prince's patience and virtue have gradually worn away. The quest is no longer a noble one, but merely an exercise in self-preservation. With his life on the line this time, the Prince won't let anyone stand in his way – even if they happen to be an invincible beast sent by order of the gods.

X ACTION / ADVENTURE

"Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum, I smell the blood of a pesky Prince"



Just looking at the screens makes us want to play



That isn't tomato sauce on those swords



PRINCE OF PERSIA 2

The sands of time stop for no man!

Ubisoft obviously had a good feeling about its 2003 hit, *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time*, to the extent that they started working on the sequel before completing the first game. Boasting the visual flair we've come to expect from Ubisoft recently and a heavier rock soundtrack than before, the as-yet unnamed sequel sees a world-weary Prince stretched to his limits after the events that unfolded at the Maharajah's palace.

It seems the Prince's time-twisting antics have left him in bad stead with the gods. As punishment for meddling with the natural flow of events the Prince has been marked for death, and the immortal being Dhaka has been dispatched to carry out the retribution. With an unrelenting, invincible nemesis on his trail, the Prince's only hope for salvation is to further taint the timelines to cover his tracks. If he can prevent The Sands of Time from ever existing, the whole incident would never have occurred. Ah, but if the original events never occurred, how could he have even been motivated to embark on a quest to undo everything in the first place. Confusing quantum physics aside, the Prince is determined to stay alive, so he sets sail to the distant, mysterious Isle from which the Sands came, unsure as to whether he can

cheat fate again.

The Prince's previous encounter with the Dagger of Time has left its mark, and once fuelled by the Sands, he regains the ability to control time. Just as he could previously, the Prince can reverse the flow of time to do over any mistakes he makes in the short term. As an enhancement to his previous powers, the Prince can still slow time, but now it only affects his surroundings while the Prince himself is free to dart about at a much faster pace than his foes. This also comes in handy when passing through corridors filled with traps like spinning blades – what was once a lethal barrier becomes a simple passage.

In the few years since his last adventure, the Prince's acrobatic skills have improved, and he's picked up more than a few new moves. His usual athletic leaps and gravity-defying runs along walls haven't faded with age, and he can now extend his wall-runs by swinging from ropes and chains, and even make rapid descents by stabbing his sword into drapes and banners and sliding down them. The addition of new moves makes for a far more dynamic, intense feel to movement, and you'll need some quick thinking to stay in one piece.

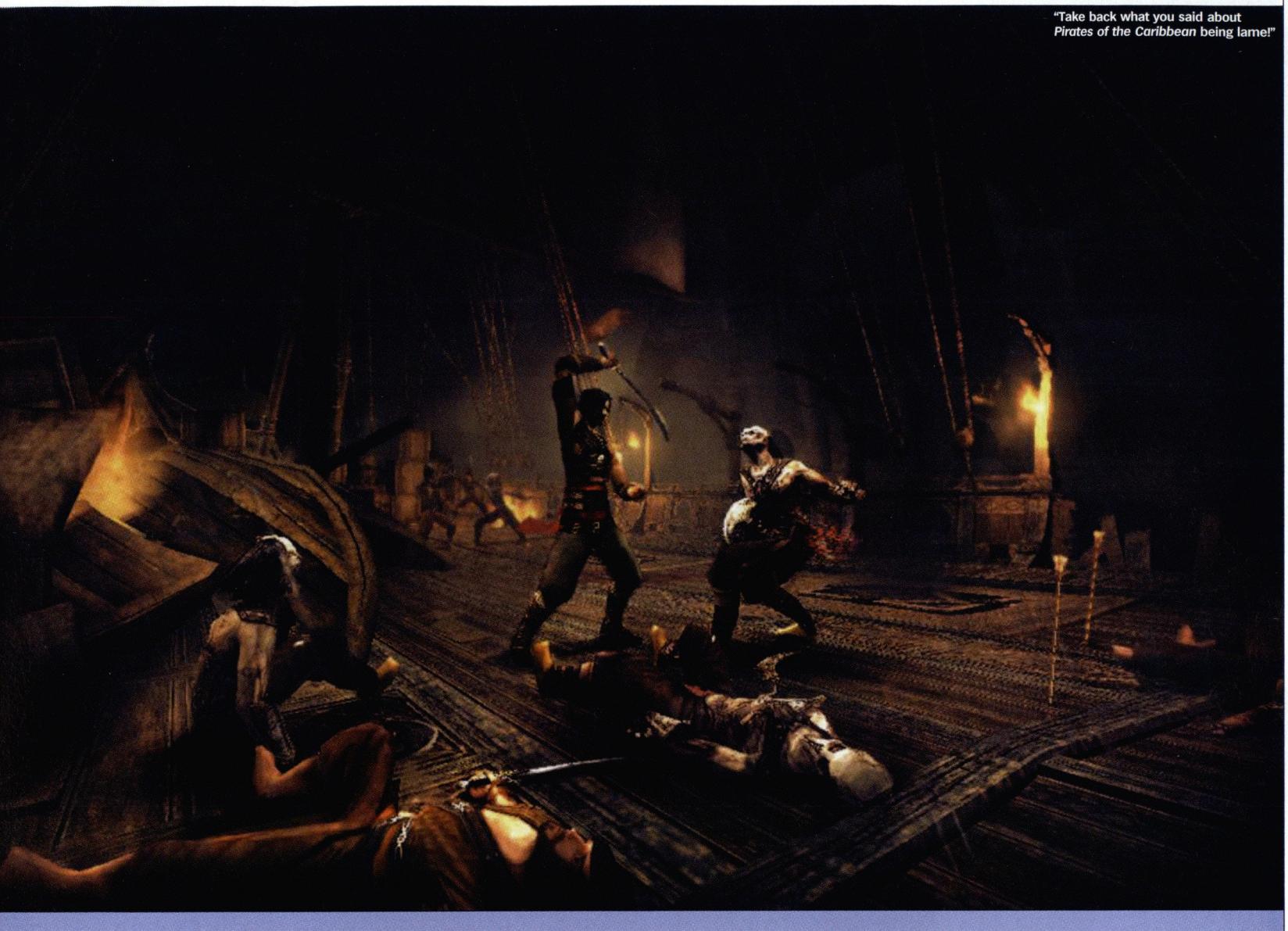
Our Persian friend is no less handy in battle, either.

He's become adept at Eastern martial arts that have added jump kicks and grappling techniques to his repertoire which assist when dealing with multiple enemies. After grabbing onto an unlucky attacker, the Prince can hurl him at other foes in any direction, use him as a human shield or brutally hew his opponent in half with his keen blade.

Though defaultly armed with a single scimitar, you can obtain another weapon from your fallen foes for some double-fisted carnage, and hurl the secondary armaments with pinpoint accuracy for an instant kill. There's even a cleaner transition between movement and battle, with the added ability to draw your sword midway through many movements. This makes for slashing attacks while wall running and spinning from columns that can decapitate your foes cleanly if timed correctly. Gruesome but satisfying.

Without an official title as yet, and only roughly halfway through production, *Prince of Persia 2* is looking like some prime stocking-stuffer this Christmas season. Any with a keen love for adventure and excitement in exotic lands will have a grand time with this one, so set sail for the nearest game store and put down a pre-order – it's gonna be an absolute scorcher. **• NO**

"Take back what you said about
Pirates of the Caribbean being lame!"



THAT'S TOTALLY BOSS

Sick of lame-ass bosses that aren't worth sticking your sword in? Try POP2's 50 foot, armoured bad asses on for size and see how tough you are!



In *The Sands of Time*, combat challenges were provided by swamping the player with numerous foes simultaneously. While you can still expect to face off with hordes of human and sand creature foes again, the sequel includes massive boss monsters that fill the screen. To beat them you'll not only need to know all the moves, but you'll also need



to use your grey matter to outsmart the big fellows. Remember, they might be big but they're not often bright. The first example we've seen is a 20-foot tall, seemingly impervious, armoured sand creature that attacks with huge club-like fists. After temporarily disabling the giant by exploiting its secret weakness (the squishy bit just above his ankle)



the Prince can scramble up its back and hack frantically at the Sand Beast's protected head, but not without having to dodge panicked attempts to dislodge him. Repeat this process three or four more times without getting yourself punched through a wall and you'll be looking at one dead Sand Beast!

HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1-2

DISTRIBUTOR: RED ANT

DEVELOPER: MIDWAY

WEBSITE: MKDECEPTION.MIDWAY.COM

LAST SEEN: OPS2#27

RELEASE DATE: SUMMER 2005

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

65%

MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION
DECEPTION is a return to the grisly roots of the series, with plenty of tasty new extras.

Characters like Sub Zero have had new *Ricki Lake* makeovers



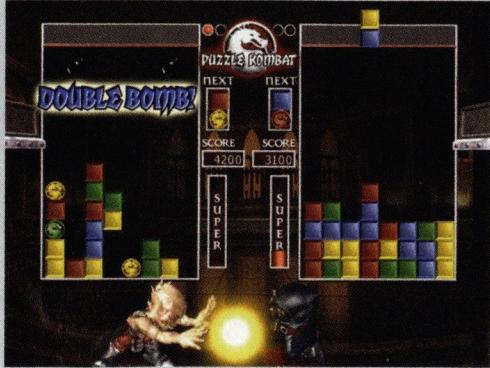
X FIGHTING

MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION

Kombat comes back with a kracking kompilation of new game modes

MORE FOR YOUR MORTAL KOMBAT DOLLAR

Best thought of as Tetris with Fatalities and Battlechess with blood, these mortal extras are a lot of fun



PUZZALITY

Puzzle Kombat pits super-cute versions of Kombatants against each other as two players try to quell the never-ending tide of coloured blocks that fall onto their half of the screen. Blocks are destroyed when coupled with Dragon Koins of the same colour, or bombs to create puzzle combos. String a few combos together, and your character's super bar fills up to unleash special unique abilities that can drastically affect the game's outcome.



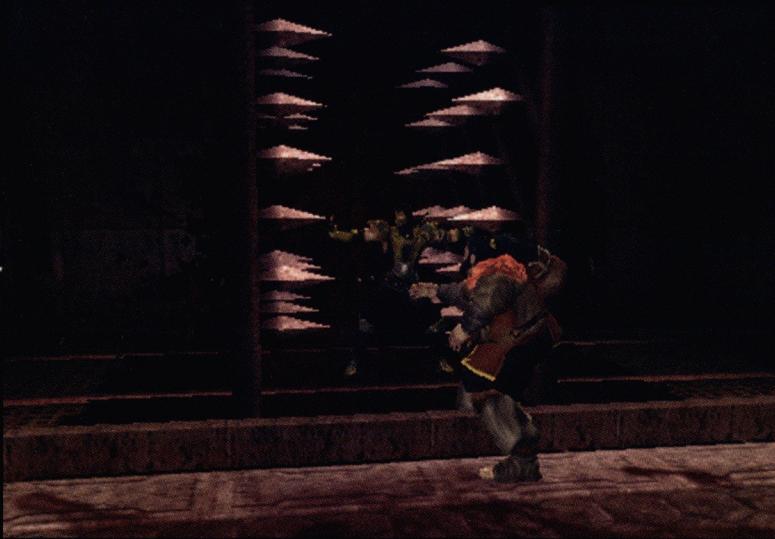
CHESS YOUR MIGHT

For a more cerebral spin on the action, you can sit down to a game of Chess Kombat. Simply landing on the same square as an opponent's piece doesn't mean you win the exchange automatically – you have to do battle to determine the winner. The five types of pieces are: Grunts are numerous, yet weak; Shifters have the ability to change form; Sorcerers have a bevy of utility spells; Champions are fearsome warriors; and Leaders are similar to a Chess King.

The Mortal Kombat series has been a roller coaster of ups and downs. At its inception, its digitised visuals and buckets of gore made it a worldwide phenomenon. The second game built on these bloody foundations with some interesting new features, but sadly, as the series progressed, it lacked innovation and fell far behind the competition, and was almost forgotten. Just when it was thought that the franchise was dead and buried, Midway brought it back to the forefront of gaming with its fifth instalment, *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance*. The saga continues with the latest episode, *Mortal Kombat: Deception*, and the developer is going about fortifying the foothold it has regained in the minds of fighting fans.

At first look, you may not notice too much difference in the core gameplay between *MK:D* and the previous game. Each character has a couple of styles of martial arts they can toggle between, and can even link the two arts together for long chain combos. Weapons are no longer standard issue, but can be acquired mid-battle from weapon racks – the trick is keeping your opponent off you for long enough to recover the blade. The main change that has been made isn't discernable from screenshots – it's the more frantic pace of the fighting.

Time to put those those yoga positions to some use, Scorpion



The speed the game plays at has been jacked up a good 15 per cent. You'll need to bring your hottest joypad skills if you want to keep up this time. Of course, don't forget the all-new, chillingly animated Fatalities. Who knew there were still original ways to kill?

Glancing over the list of competitors in this year's tournament, you'll notice a few familiar faces that were previously thought to be lost have returned. Princess Katana's sai-wielding evil twin Mileena is back, along with the demonic blade-beast Baraka and the Native American warrior Nightwolf, each seeking to prove their worth again. The ever-popular rival ninjas, Sub-Zero and Scorpion are still out of each other's blood, and are met by an assortment of past warriors and all-new characters, including the errant samurai Hotaru and thunder goddess Ashra. At this stage *MK:D* is shaping up to be the largest *Mortal Kombat* roster ever.

Taking a page out of *Dead or Alive*'s book, *MK:D* will have intensely interactive environments. Rather than the simple acid showers from *MK:DA*, opponents can be battered through walls, belted through ceilings with uppercuts and even pounded through floors to reveal whole new fighting arenas. Arena obstacles like pillars are entirely destructible, and there's even a dojo level

with training dummies suspended from the roof that can be struck to bowl over your enemy. It doesn't stop there either. Usually located at the last tier of an arena, there are danger zones that you can knock your opponent into for an instant kill. So far there's a massive furnace for a fiery, agonising doom, and a giant mechanical device you could only describe as a 15-foot blender – anyone straying too near is dragged in, ground into grotesque mincemeat. To keep with the grisly theme, the infamous 'Pit' stage is back after an extended absence, and is as disturbing as ever.

As well as the refinements in the main game, *MK:D* boasts two new game modes (see boxout), a totally reworked Konquest mode that bears a closer resemblance to a full-blown adventure/RPG game and complete online support with voice. Now, more than ever before, from the comfort of your lounge chair, you can reach out to gamers from around the world... then rip their limbs off and beat them with the wet end! As certain deposed Outworld rulers might say, *Mortal Kombat: Deception* is looking... 'Outstanding'! **NO**



HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1

DISTRIBUTOR: THQ

DEVELOPER: CAPCOM / DREAM FACTORY

WEBSITE: WWW.CAPCOM.COM

LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK

RELEASE DATE: AUGUST

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%

CRIMSON TEARS, with its unique blend of RPG, brawling and anime babes, looks like it'll be one helluva pretty game.



The characters are walking weapons. Seriously!

Little does he know, Uncle Bob's cuddles can be lethal!

It's logical to go into a fight semi-naked. Not!



X ACTION



The game is surprisingly long, just like these swords!

CRIMSON TEARS

Weapons of Monster Destruction

It's Tokyo in the year 2049. The city has become a warren of streets and subways. Here, weapons manufacturer A.R.M.A operates and of course, where they suffer a catastrophe in the form of an explosion in its DNA research division, opening up a multi-dimensional rift full of monsters in the most convoluted part of Tokyo.

Guess what your job will be... A.R.M.A.'s solution to the problem is to send in humanoid weapons – the Mutie Maids. What better way to fight biological war weapons than with biological war weapons?

The team will consist of three playable characters, each with their own abilities for whacking beasties. The game features close fighting and ranged combat, with upgradeable weapons and martial arts moves for each character. Also, each character will come with a special kill-all attack which unleashes devastating damage on all the enemies in your immediate vicinity.

The game will be split up into seven dungeons, each composed of a number of floors with randomly generated layouts. Your goal in each will be to find the transport which will get you to the top floor, and fight the boss on there. It sounds like it could be kind of short,

but the gameplay is relatively free-roaming. You'll be able to spend as much time on each floor as you like, and, given the complex nature of the layouts, it could take you quite a while to find your way.

The developer has thrown another interesting feature into the traditional fighter mix. Amber, Kadie and Tokio are not human – they're humanoid weapons, made up of both biological parts and machinery, and the more you use them, the more heat they will build up. Mostly this will be pretty slow, but some of the stronger attacks will cause you to overheat very quickly indeed. This means you'll have to learn a bit of restraint, and plan out the best way to attack before leaping into battle.

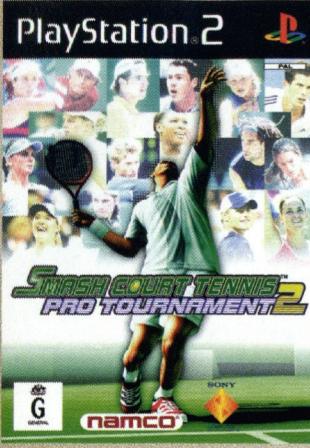
As always, the graphics look like they will be absolutely breathtaking with a mixture of stunning cel-shading and 3D CGI. Yes, we know cel-shading is a little passé at this point, but Capcom's development teams seem to have a knack for it that no-one else can touch.

While we think the game would certainly benefit from including a multiplayer, it still looks like *Crimson Tears* will have enough collecting, upgrading, cinematic sequencing and lengthy, complicated combos to satisfy the most hardened of RPG and fighting fans. **MS**

THREE HEADS ARE BETTER THAN TWO

You've gotta love multiple characters, particularly when you can choose one to suit your fighting style best. Fancy samurai-style sword fighting? Amber is one of those sword-wielding babes we hear so much about, carrying two of the nasty blades for extra deadliness. What about an explosives expert? Little Kadie is good with bombs, as well as being deceptively quick and strong for her size, allowing her to wield large weapons that only slow the other two down. And then there's the bad boy of the bunch, Tokio, for those of you who fancy yourselves as masters of firearms – and since "two is better than one" seems to be the motto of the game, he carries around double the firepower in those nice little holsters of his.





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fun, anyone?
PlayStation®2

HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1-2 (MULTI ONLINE)

DISTRIBUTOR: ACCLAIM

DEVELOPER: JUICE GAMES

WEBSITE: WWW.JUICEDTHEGAME.COM

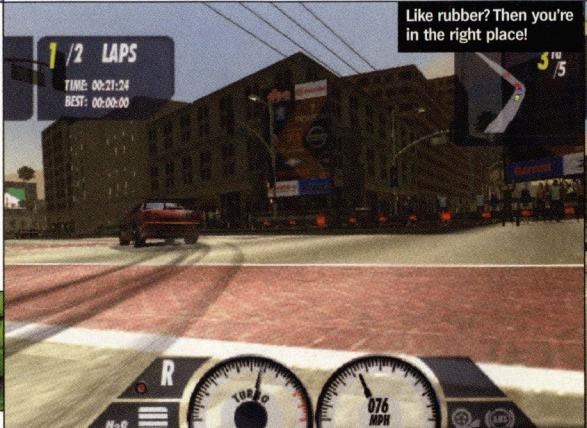
LAST SEEN: OPS2#25

RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

60%

JUICED is what you get when you cross *Gran Turismo* with *Need For Speed Underground*. Yep, it's looking good.



SMASHING... NOT REALLY

In the build we played, after a few "accidents" some damage to the vehicle was noticeable. The first to go were our neon lights. After we wiped away the tears and continued the race, we went on with our reckless ways. Eventually we punctured a hole in the nitrous valve and started losing NOS. While none of this sounds too exciting at this stage, fingers are crossed that as development continues there will be more noticeable damage visible in the final version.



Maybe they should call it Shiny Red Car instead...



JUICED

Money, respect... and fast cars

We all know *Juiced* is going to be one of the fastest racers to hit the PS2 this year, but racing fans will be happy to hear that it will also be one of the deepest racing experiences this side of *Gran Turismo*.

The main cog in its engine is the Career mode that not only requires you to earn money and buy cars, but earn respect from the various gangs around town. Respect is just as valuable as money, because without it you may not be able race in certain events. Respect can be earned in various ways including spending large amounts of green on your vehicle, having lots of cars stashed in your garage, and the way you shake your trunk on the racetrack. If you can make it from the start line to the finish without receiving so much as a scratch on your fully sick car then you earn respect. You'll earn even more if you don't drive like Miss Daisy and actually win the race.

In fact, crashing is not such a hot idea at all in *Juiced* because any repairs will come out of your own wallet. As it does in real life, money makes the world go round and you're going to need plenty of it to keep up with the other racers in *Juiced*. Fortunately racing isn't the only way to score moolah as you can also place bets on races. Putting more money down on the table will also earn you more respect from your racing peers and obviously the more you bet, the more you win allowing you to upgrade your beast.

There's plenty of mod work to do in *Juiced* so make sure you have some overalls and a bucket of grease handy. *Juiced* features an upgrade system similar to the one found in *Gran Turismo*. You can install various real brand parts and then tune them using slider bars so you get the best performance out of your roadster. Acclaim is making sure the system is very simple to use so even players who know nothing about cars can become a grease monkey in no time.

And don't thinking you'll be tuning up your mum's Daihatsu Charade either because all the cars in *Juiced* are designed for high speed thrills. You'll be able scream through the streets in cars built in the USA and the UK. But if you're after a little home cooking then you can also get behind the wheel of a Holden SS or Monaro and show the world that we've got the best cars.

If you're not a fan of the technical side of racing then you can still just jump in and race. *Juiced* will also feature an arcade mode where you don't need to worry about spark plugs or decals – making it to the finish line first is all that counts. We've yet to race it against *NFS Underground 2* but it's looking great, so no matter what, we'll be having a speedy Christmas.



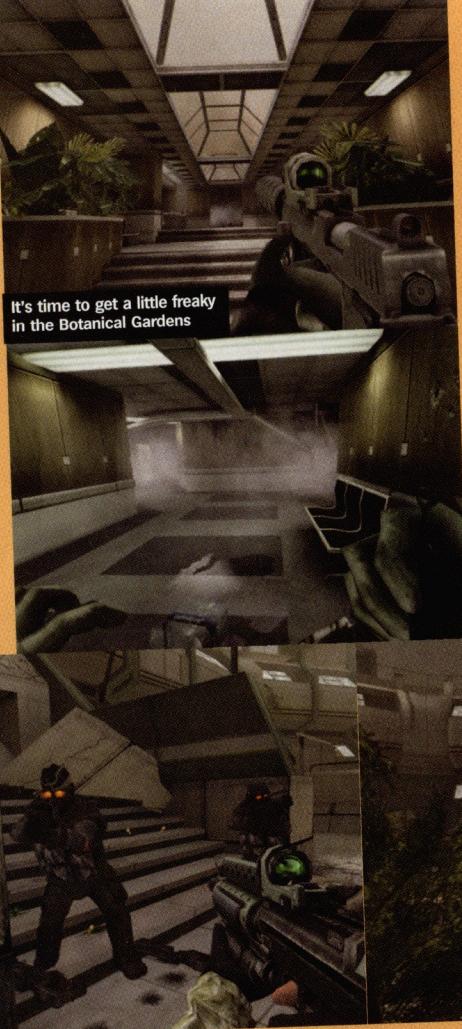
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WAR IS COMING
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PlayStation® 2



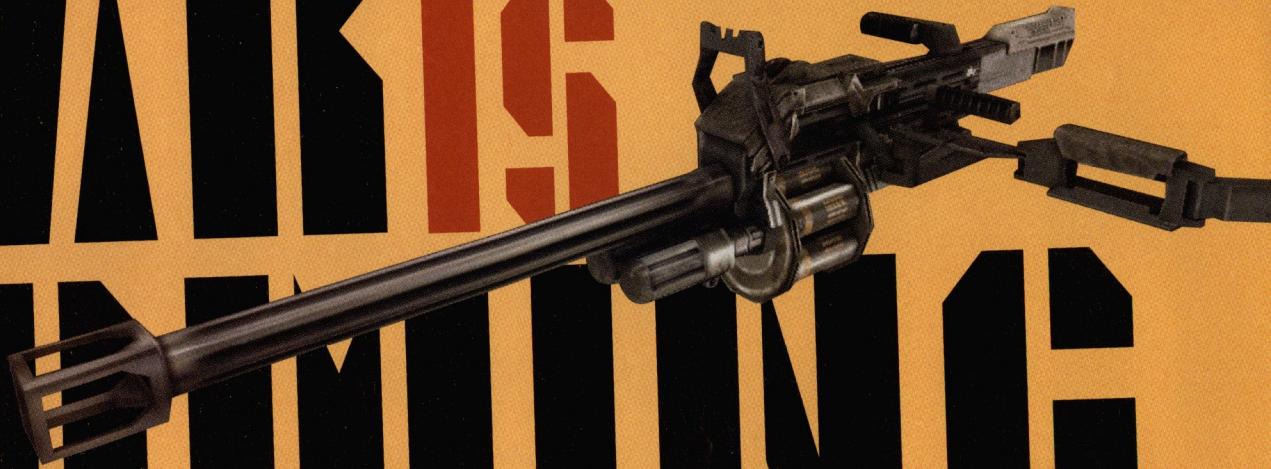
illzone is set in the not-too-distant future, when mankind is reaching out to the stars and terraforming distant planets under the watchful eye of the combined Earth forces, known as the ISA. Detecting a moment of weakness, a separatist military faction called Helghast forms, with delusional plans of taking over through force of might. On the recently inhabited planet of Vekta, the Helghast begin their blitzkrieg on the unsuspecting colonists, and the ISA must scramble to hold their own against the oncoming onslaught. You take control of a specialist ISA squad, injected deep into the conflict surrounding Vekta City in a bid to quell the

Helghast uprising.

It only takes a glance at the sumptuous screenshots to realise that *Killzone* is a visual smorgasbord unparalleled on PS2. In the thick of combat, with blinding muzzle flash and fiery explosions kicking dust into the air, a dozen figures desperately scramble for cover as the burnt-out husk of a Helghast tank smolders nearby. Every sandbag and turn of barbed wire on the battle lines is clearly discernable as you scan the scene over the sights of your assault rifle. How is it that this devious Dutch dev team has harnessed the extra horsepower from the PS2 where so many others have failed? Guerrilla Managing Director Hermen Hulst has the answers. →

WORDS: NICK O'SHEA

INVASION



OPS2 goes behind enemy lines in an attempt to seize top secret information from Guerrilla Games about its highly anticipated *Killzone*

KILLZONE



KILLZONE



AIMING TO PLEASE

With the enemy in sight, it's time to lock and load. Undoubtedly one of the most important parts of any battle is the weapons it is waged with. "We did extensive testing with real-world weapons, and came to the conclusion that 'bullets are cool'" explains Roy Postma. Through more than a few trips to an Amsterdam firing range, the Guerrilla team found existing ballistic weapons are pretty satisfying to use, so, by and large, the *Killzone* weapons aren't that displaced from what you'd see used in modern warfare. To mirror the philosophies of the two sides of the conflict, the Helghast weaponry goes all out on firepower, often at the cost of accuracy, while the ISA prefer efficient, high tech arms. To give you a taste of these weapons of mass destruction, we've picked some of the most brutal ones out for you.

ISA WEAPONS



CHAIN GUN

Mows down enemy units like fresh spring grass. With belt-fed ammunition, reloading is no longer a concern, but you do need to be wary of overheating.



MISSILE LAUNCHER

All the power you need for taking out tanks or busting bunkers, and usable in two modes – either laser guided for pin-point accuracy or simple 'fire-and-forget'.



ASSAULT RIFLE

The staple of the ISA infantry. With a 2x zoom scope, dual magazines for quick reloading and a integrated grenade launcher, it's a versatile weapon and shouldn't be underestimated.



SURVIVAL KNIFE

When all else fails, and it comes down to you or them. Best used when taking the enemy by surprise.



PISTOL

Your standard 9mm sidearm. You wouldn't want to have to rely on it, but it'll do in a pinch.



SMS

A commando-style hybrid weapon that combines a submachine gun and a grenade launcher in one compact package.



SHOTGUN

Ideal for close quarters combat, the Shoty is lethal at short range and gives a generous peppering from afar.

HELGHAST WEAPONS



ALAT

Armed with armour piercing rounds, the Helghast ALAT quickly turns an armored tank into scrap metal.



MACHINE GUN

Mounted on a tripod for stability, these guns are reminiscent of the German MG-42 from WWII.



ADAT

A 'personal anti-tank weapon'. You'd have to think that if someone blows up your tank with one of these, you'd take it personally.



MACHINE PISTOL

Not to be outdone, the Helghast manage to incorporate machine gun rates of fire into their basic side arms.



SQUAD CANNON

This waist-mounted weapon fires large bore explosive rounds, sadistically engineered to destroy groups of infantry.



LIGHT MACHINE GUN

The only weapon in the Helghast arsenal that doesn't scream overkill, the Light MG is mainly used for suppressive fire.



SNIPER RIFLE

The perennial favorite for ventilating enemy heads from long range. Features a powerful scope with multiple levels of zoom.

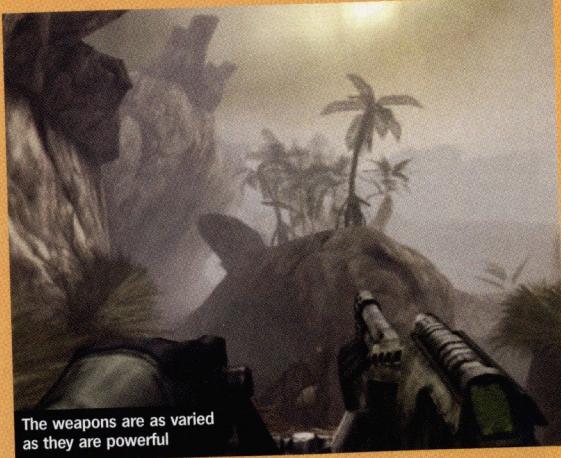
"Guerrilla began working on the game proper in early 2002 but, before that, we dedicated two years to the game engine, experimenting with development kits to get the most out of the PS2." Despite frantically checking the console for extra processors, the OPS2 crew is forced to concede that a four year production schedule is a force to be reckoned with. Another of the real coup de graces of *Killzone*'s visual artistry is its use of detailed first person animations. Clearly, the weapons are a large part of what the character sees of themselves throughout the game, and *Killzone* features extended reload animations where the character slaps in the new magazine and chambers the first round in grand fashion. These detailed reloading sequences help to make them all the more real in the player's mind. Don't expect weapons to be alone in getting the five star treatment – everything from brutal bludgeoning melee attacks to ladder movement has been dressed up to the nines.

KEEPING IT REAL.

So where did the idea for *Killzone*'s setting come from? "The world around us became our biggest resource," tells Lead Concept Artist Roy Postma. "We wanted to give the player a constant feel of recognition, like the Vekta City is their home. 'Reality with a twist' is a catchphrase we've come to adopt when working on *Killzone*."

In terms of selecting the specific areas, Hermen shares how Guerrilla looked to the past. "The team has drawn on real conflicts from history, and fictional works that have illustrated them like *Saving Private Ryan*, *Blackhawk Down* and *Apocalypse Now*. We've taken those evocative moments and translated them into the *Killzone* universe."

From this, gamers can expect intense trench warfare, steamy jungle combat and block-to-block streetfighting in rubble-strewn slums. To give *Killzone* a cinematic atmosphere to match its source material, they've enlisted first rate voice talent like Sean Pertwee (*Event Horizon*, *Dog Soldiers*), Stephen Berkoff (*A Clockwork Orange*) and Ronnie Cox (*Total Recall*, *Robocop*) and composed a full orchestra score to be provided by the Prague Symphony Orchestra – all presented in Dolby Digital II surround sound.



The weapons are as varied as they are powerful



"WE JUST CAN'T STOP PLAYING IT.
ALL DAY. EVERY DAY. CAN'T GET IT
OUT OF OUR HEADS."

Official PlayStation® 2 Magazine Richard Keith

"THE MOST ADDICTIVE GAME I'VE
PLAYED IN YEARS."

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KILLZONE



MEN OF HONOUR

→ Presented with the ominous task of saving their world from extinction, the game's stars had to be a pretty formidable bunch, so Guerrilla has had to work hard on getting the team just right. The heroes of *Killzone* come from a diverse range of backgrounds. Each character possesses special skills and abilities that significantly affect the way the game feels, to the extent that replaying the same level with a different character provides a different experience. In keeping with the squad-based combat setting, the remaining team members will be controlled by the computer, and will back you up along the way.

The commander of the group is Templar. He has a broad range of advanced training and is capable of using almost all military hardware. He's well rounded, and probably the most balanced choice for gamers new to the genre.

Surprisingly, the cold-blooded killer in the squad is actually a female. Sneaking through the shadows and isolating her enemies is the preferred approach for Luger. Lithe and agile, she can rappel along ropes and cables to access otherwise unreachable terrain and slip through cracks and ventilation shafts to catch enemy forces unawares. Her training also allows her to kill her enemies quickly and quietly, whether it's using her specially designed silenced submachine gun or getting personal with her combat knife. It's pretty hard to scream without a throat, after all.

Rico is the heavy weapons specialist. This big unit is nothing short of an armored division on legs. Normally armed with a massive chain gun, Rico carves through whole squads of Helghast opposition in the blink of an eye. With a lot more firepower than his fellow team members, Rico provides a more free-flowing 'run-and-gun' style of gameplay. His carnage without the tactics makes for a refreshing change of pace.

Formerly a high-ranking officer among the Helghast

Everywhere you look the detail is stunning



IN A PERFECT WORLD ALL PLAYSTATION GAMES WOULD BE MADE BY GUERRILLA!

Despite the futuristic setting
Killzone seems totally believable



THE BATTLE LINES ARE DRAWN

The first-person shooter genre was always going to be a tough nut to crack, and there are some strong titles already established on PS2 that Guerrilla's war-torn saga is going to have to fight past to get to the number one spot.

**WARHAMMER 40K: FIRE WARRIOR**

Online Support: 2-8 players
LAN Support: No
Split Screen Multiplayer: 2-4 players
Bot Support: No

OPS2M Rating: 7/10

Definitely has the most in common with *Killzone* in terms of setting. A tiresome single player component and a fairly average multiplayer mode with few maps or options left this one largely forgotten.

**SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS**

Online Support: 2-16 players
LAN Support: 2-16 players
Split Screen Multiplayer: No
Bot Support: No

OPS2M Rating: 8/10

With features and game modes up the wazoo, *SOCOM II* is the game that *Killzone* will have to wrest the crown from to become top dog. What other game lets you dance the funky chicken over your foe's fallen corpse?

**MEDAL OF HONOUR: RISING SUN**

Online Support: 2-4 players
LAN Support: No
Split Screen Multiplayer: 2-4 players
Bot Support: Yes

OPS2M Rating: 9/10

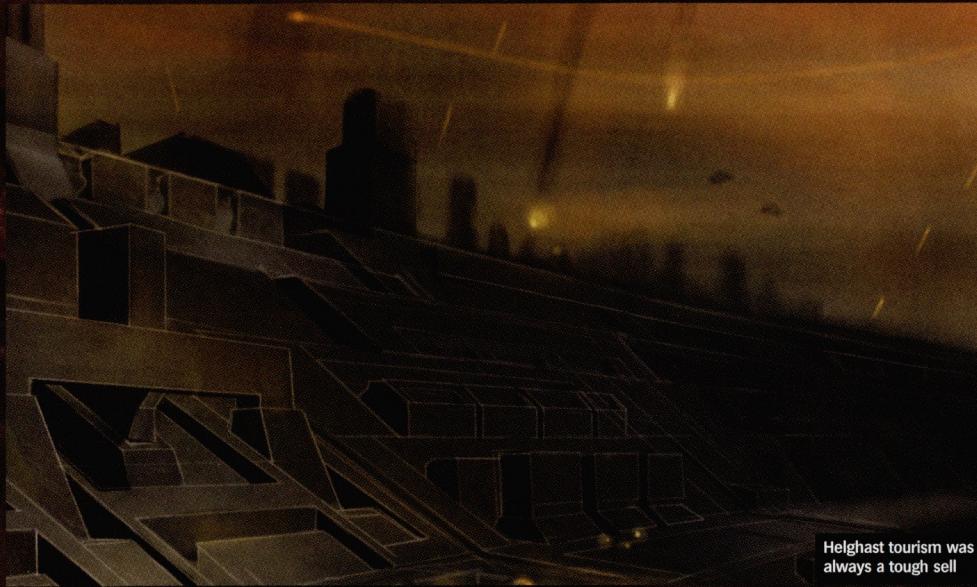
While it may not have featured a wealth of different levels and configurations *MOH:RS*'s multiplayer game simply features good weapon balance, tight controls and voice support. Being backed up by one of the best single player PS2 war games doesn't hurt either.





FROM THE GUERRILLA'S MOUTH

OPS2 was lucky enough to talk to Killzone's Product Manager Alastair Burns to get a little more insight into exactly how this Dutch blockbuster was created.



Helghast tourism was always a tough sell

OPS2: With *Shellshock* and *Killzone*, Guerrilla is rapidly making a name for itself as one of the premier games studios. What do you think is the secret to your studio's success?

AB: The secret of our success? Well, if I told you... haha. Seriously though, we always set out to make high quality, fun games and we always had our sights set on making it as an international concern, not as a local game developer catering simply to the Dutch market. We have driven ourselves from the start to achieve the best, to draw more polys, to keep design consistency and of course we have had excellent support from our publishers. If I had to sum it up, we never went out to 'beat another studio', our attitude has always been to produce our best and be proud of it.

OPS2: The level of detail in the visuals you've achieved with *Killzone* is nothing short of breathtaking. How have you achieved such amazing results? Was it difficult striking a balance between detail and performance?

AB: Consistency has been a watchword from the start. We knew that there were two major elements in making a game look good: consistency in design and good, consistent technology. When we created the *Killzone* game world, we relied heavily on reality. We built our own planet and city, but made sure that the player would always be able to recognise the form and function of any of the objects in that world. We call it reality with a twist. On the other hand, we use our technology to manage the amount of detail we are showing on screen. For example, we use numerous variations of the same soldier. When he is at a distance,

regime from World War II? What motivated you to select the most infamous fascist group as a model for the enemy?

AB: You always need a good enemy to fight, otherwise, what's the point? You can find the origins of the Helghast in a number of things. Their gas masks are inspired by WW1 British equipment but I would be lying if I said they had nothing to do with WW2 Nazi styles. The Helghast are a classic enemy, dark and totalitarian in nature. The individual is not important in their philosophy. For example, their weaponry has a basis in German WW2 and Cold War Russian designs, created to fire at high rates, but with a low accuracy due to poor manufacturing. The Helghast are an Army nation and their regime mirrors this.

OPS2: As two sides in a conflict, how did you differentiate the ISA forces from the Helghast opposition in terms of design?

AB: If the Helghast have their origins in the WW2 German and Post WW2 Russian designs and approaches (mass manufacturing, low quality produce) the ISA are the opposite. The ISA philosophy values individual ability, they manufacture quality, but expensive technologies. With this simple ground rule in mind, we created two very different armies.

OPS2: The ISA squad features four operatives with different specializations. How hard was it to institute four different styles of gameplay in each level?

AB: We knew from the very start that designing one level to cater to four different play styles would be a challenge and we were adamant that we could pull it off. So without giving too much

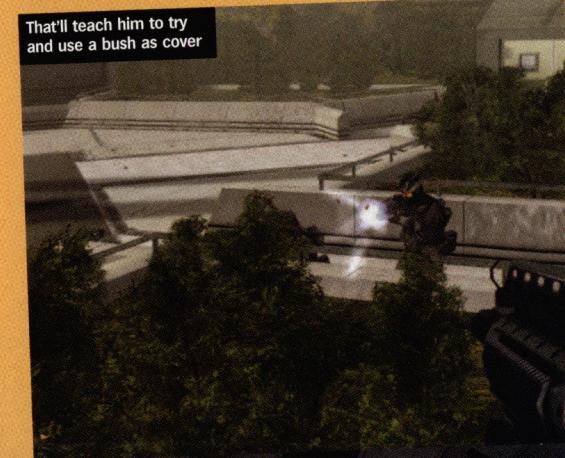
forces, Hakha saw the error of his ways and crossed over to the ISA. Due to his prior knowledge of Helghast technology and procedures, Hakha can confidently infiltrate enemy ranks and disrupt their operations from the inside through subterfuge.

SPACE NAZIS

Every hero needs an antagonist, and after a lot of deliberation, Roy had this to say, "We really wanted to have them be humans to keep that personal feeling, but still make them different and recognizable. The Helghast philosophy is about masses, and doesn't really believe in the individual – their appearance reflects that. The uniforms include elements from German uniforms from both World Wars, as well as Russian uniforms from as recently as the Cold War." If there's anything in a futuristic setting you can be more passionate about fighting than space Nazis, we're yet to hear about it.

Sadly, when it comes to arguably the most anticipated element of *Killzone* – its multiplayer – Guerrilla is remaining tight-lipped. "*Killzone*'s multiplayer component will include split-screen play with bots as well as online capability," Guerrilla's Development Director Arjan Brussee proudly added. "The action will follow closely that of the single player game, and as such will stick to squad-based battles between the Helghast and the ISA."

This is great news, as most of the top shelf first-person shooters so far have gone all out for internet play, or split-screen support, and not both. As far as game modes go, Guerrilla's E3 booth showed the gaming public the pure deathmatch component, but it's expected to be joined by at least objective based play, and several more – one can only speculate that it has a few surprises up its sleeves. ▶



"WE HAVE DRIVEN OURSELVES FROM THE START TO ACHIEVE THE BEST"

you only see the version that takes up the least amount of processor power. Up close, you want to see all the detail, so we use the most performance-heavy version we have. As you can imagine, balancing all of this took a lot of experimentation, time and effort.

OPS2: What kinds of behaviour were you looking to emulate with the AI?

AB: *Killzone*'s artificial intelligence has been very important from the very beginning. It is one of the key 'responses' the player expects from our game. You fire a bullet, you expect a response. So we taught the Helghast to be good soldiers. Our first rule of AI was: no cheating. None of our soldiers can 'see' through walls. They have eyes and ears, they make decisions, they attack or retreat, seek cover and reload when low on ammo, they recognize danger and in all these situations, they make their own decisions based only on what they know. To give the AI context, we did a lot of research on tactics, both individual and squad movements and then fed this back in as a major influence. We finally gave our individual soldier some buddies. We built up the emphasis on fighting as a squad and working as a supportive team and in doing that, we had the makings of a vast Helghast Army with different soldier types, different weaponry and some very different approaches.

OPS2: The Helghast forces seem to be largely based on the Nazi

away we decided to clearly define our game characters and allow their own abilities to emphasise the different routes they would take. Templar is a commando and has a set of abilities to match. Luger is an assassin so she can climb more than the others and slip into smaller areas to get that gratifying kill. Rico is the heavy weapons guy, he totes a gigantic hip mounted chaingun/rocket launcher combo, but this restricts him elsewhere and Hakha, a spy, uses his own bag of tricks to progress through the game. Like I say, I don't want to give up too much but you can already see how we can influence gameplay based on character type.

OPS2: To what extent will the multiplayer aspects mirror the action of the single player game? Aside from straight deathmatch, what modes of play will be included?

AB: We're still keeping mum on the exact game types in *Killzone*'s multiplayer. However, you can play online and offline. You can play either ISA or Helghast and yes, the game types are based around the events that occur in the single player game. We wanted to stray away from unrealistic challenges and adopted a more mission or objective oriented approach, to give the player a good reason to fight and a sense of achievement when they win. In essence, the multiplayer element of *Killzone* is designed to really compliment the single player experience.





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VS.



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tv POD

INTERVIEW: RICHIE YOUNG

This Melbourne comedy trio LOVE their videogames. OPS2 says, “do yourself a favour” and check out their hilarious song “Make You Happy”!



OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE: It's obvious you guys know your videogames – what are some of your favourites?

GATESY: I think one of my favourite games of all time would have to be *Interstate 76*. Mad Max meets Cleopatra Jones featuring cars with rocket launchers and dudes with afros. Great levels and story – I even bought the soundtrack. I adored everything about it and I'd love it to be re-released on the newer platforms.

I'm not talkin' *Vigilante 8* – that was such a piece of pooh. Others favourites would be the entire *Zelda/Mario/Mario Kart* series. Obvious favourites now include *GTA: Vice City*. We play a lot of that on tour.

YON: Not in this order, but *GTA3* and *Vice City* and *X-Wing*. And the first couple of *Dark Forces* games.

SCOD: The original *X-Wing* on the PC was awesome. Beautifully simple engine with so many strategic possibilities. Great game. Ah, how I long for the days when *Star Wars* games weren't a bucket of shit. Also *Zelda: Ocarina of Time* on the N64. I cried at the end of that. But then again I'll cry at anything. Ladies.

OPS2: Who's the best gamer?

GATESY: I'm quite dextrous, Scod is a great strategist and Yon makes great coffee. Our strengths come out depending on the game. Scod is good at sporty games and I revel in the driving ones. We both love our adventures too. Yon... well... he's good at reloading guns.

YON: I think I would have to say Gatesy. But it's hard to say. Scod's pretty good too. The only thing we're sure of is that I'm the worst.

SCOD: Well, I am when it comes to turn-based strategy. But you don't get much of a go at turn-based strategy in the hotel room after the show. Not a real party starter. You pretty much want shooting, punching or hitting a ball. At which point we're talking Gatesy.

OPS2: How'd your girlfriends react to the song "Make You Happy" when they heard it? It must hit close to home for them too! (*essentially, a "pisstake" of a man's relationship with his games and his girlfriend!)

GATESY: I'm currently single, but every ex I have would've laughed. I remember the massive arguments my girlfriend and I used to have as soon as I booted up the old Amiga. An old girlfriend really got into *Zelda* on the N64 and I lost her for weeks. I really got to know how the "other half" feel!

SCOD: This song in no way reflects any aspect of my marriage. It certainly has no bearing on my relationship with my wife Emily and any similarity to any real-world love life, living or dead, is purely coincidental. Unquote. Your Honour.

OPS2: Any stories that inspired the song?

GATESY: It's funny because at the time when we wrote it, we thought it would be thrown into the 'too geeky' basket but it surprised us how many people responded to it. It really made us realise just how huge an impact gaming has had on popular culture. My mum even knows what "save my game" means.

YON: This didn't really inspire the song, but once a girl asked me out while I was playing *Age of Empires*. We went out for two years but it didn't work out.

SCOD: What we found interesting about the whole thing was how universal the reaction was. We kind of thought it might be too 'in'. Nope. It would seem that the catastrophic effect videogaming has on humans is more widespread than we previously imagined! We even get women coming up and saying stuff like 'that song is so about my marriage... not that my husband's into videogames. He's into cars. But it's exactly the same.' So it would seem that the message is that men suck, videogames or not.

I keep desperately trying to get my wife to play games. But she's steadfastly not interested. She tried *Mario Kart*

"I'm quite dextrous, Scod is a great strategist and Yon makes great coffee."

on the 64, but she kept driving at the walls. It was an agonising experience. I'd rather forget the whole thing. She likes *Tetris* though.

OPS2: Why is it, you think, that games still don't have the same appeal amongst the gals?

GATESY: Generally speaking, guys love gadgets. They love controlling and building things. They also don't mind sitting in a smokey apartment all day playing videogames. They like the escape. Girls are a bit smarter so they enjoy something called 'human interaction' I believe. The real world is far more interesting to them than any videogame. But when you do manage to get them into a game, they train like Rocky and kick your arse.

YON: I think it might be changing a bit. I was gonna say it's because of the violence but girls I know love (and seem to have a natural aptitude for) fighting games. My wife loves *Tetris*, I think, because she craves order.

OPS2: Do girls laugh as much when you perform it live,

(or are they looking at their boyfriends and scolding?!)

GATESY: Laughing and scolding. I think they like the fact that somebody has pointed it out. It's a 'nobody wins', 'what ya gonna do?' situation.

YON: I think they do. Maybe it's the first chance they've had to laugh at a sad situation. I think it can be pretty cathartic. Yes. We're a bit like therapists, you see. We're much more than light entertainment.

SCOD: They all laugh and then they go home and fight.

OPS2: Who came up with the idea for the song?

SCOD: Yeah I did. Don't tell my wife though.

OPS2: How long have you guys been together?

GATESY: We started in 1996. I'd just spent three and a half grand on a Pentium 100.

SCOD: Since about *Dark Forces*. The first one, with the Super Robot Stormtroopers. And whilst we're on the topic, was it or was it not the first game with fully 3D levels, pre-dating *Quake* by about six months? And yet *Quake* gets the credit. There is no justice.

OPS2: Any stand-ups/acts you want to "shout out"?

GATESY: Ross Noble, Dave Hughes and Maria Bamford.

YON: Daniel Kitson. Maria Bamford. Hughesy. I love Hughesy too.

SCOD: Yeah. Daniel Kitson is one of the great *World Cup Soccer* players. The Scared Wierd Little Guys introduced us to the idea of a Touring Rig – an idea we have since taken up with gusto. Our touring rig? I'm glad you asked. Two custom – that's Custom – roadcases. In one: a Denon shelf audio system. In the other: a console and, yes – a big-ass digital projector. Yeah, you heard me. Who's Your Daddy? See the flip side of the games/relationships paradox is that when we're on tour, I never go out. And my wife's kind of happy with that. ▀

+"MAKE you HAPPY"

Anyone who caught the Melbourne Comedy Festival earlier this year will understand why the OPS2 team became instant fans. Printing the lyrics don't do their game-dedicated song justice (hear it for FULL appreciation) but here's one sample lyric that sets its tone!



Tripod: Before we get down to love,

Yon and Gatesy: Before we get down...

Scod: ... I just gotta finish this level.

Yon and Gatesy: Doo doo, doo doo, Doo-doo doo-doo

Scod: You see, I got a high... score tonight

Tripod: And I just want to save my game!"

WORDS: RICHIE YOUNG

Apocalypse Now

Resident Evil and PlayStation go hand in hand.

Soon, we'll see if Hollywood can handle the zombies

C'mon, Raccoon City does have its highlights

On Milla Jovovich

Primarily known for her beauty, Milla reprises her role as Alice in *Resident Evil Apocalypse*. Somewhat surprisingly to some, Milla actually began acting back in 1988 when she appeared in *Two Moon Junction*. Born in the Soviet Union in 1974, Milla also began modelling early (aged nine) and sparked plenty of controversy at the time with many people arguing the virtues and merits of such young models.

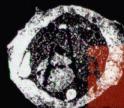
The History of Evil

The Resident Evil games are true stayers on Planet PlayStation. Dating way back to 1996, Resident Evil first came to prominence as a pioneering survival-horror game and early PlayStation owners lapped it up for its mix of puzzles and level intensity. Shinji Mikami is the man behind the game and he has gone on to become one of Capcom's leading producers. His famous series now spawns several genres including G-Con shooting games. Now of course, Resident Evil is hot property on the silver screen.

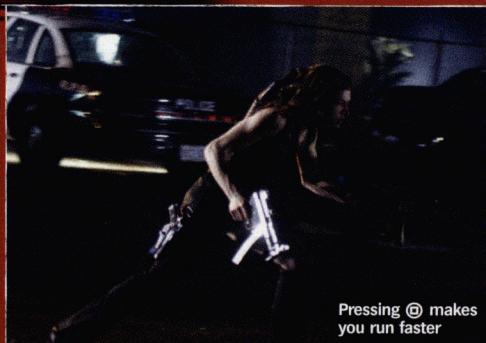
RESIDENT EVIL (1996, PSONE)
This is the original and still the classic. Set mainly inside a mansion this is looking relatively dated now, but it is a pioneering survival-horror masterpiece.



RESIDENT EVIL 2 (1998, PSONE)
The second in the series kicks off a month after the end of the first. Umbrella have unleashed the T-virus and zombies and fear are taken to freaky, new heights!

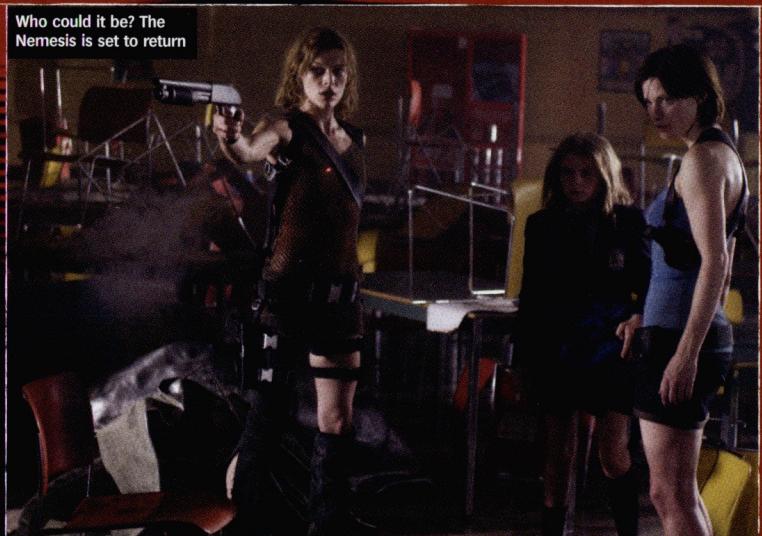


A deadly virus has been unleashed on Raccoon City. It must be *Resident Evil*! The sequel to the first movie, *Resident Evil Apocalypse* is almost upon us. *OPS2* gets the country's exclusive first look...



Pressing @ makes you run faster

The Wiggles go all Resident Evil!



Resident Evil is back! *OPS2* are able to confirm that the sequel to the first movie, *Apocalypse* has finally wrapped filming and is currently in post-production and gearing up to be released on October 21.

Excited? The *Resident Evil* juggernaut continues to grow from strength to strength and is now a far cry from being a mere survival-horror game for the original PlayStation. With a phenomenal budget behind it, *Apocalypse* will be a zombie movie like no other. Even more interestingly, it seems that the studio behind the movies, Columbia Tristar, is even more committed to making *Apocalypse* true to the essence of the



There's something very HOT in this picture



RE: NEMESIS (1999, PSONE)
Jill Valentine stars and the constant threat of the Nemesis struck fear into anyone who played it. The slowdown is one of the most memorable in history.



RE: GUN SURVIVOR (2000, PSONE)
This was the first of the series to be released as a G-Con lightgun game. You play as Ark Thompson who awakes after a helicopter crash with just his gun...



RE: CODE VERONICA (2000, PS)
Claire Redfield (who first appeared in *Resident Evil 2*) returns to Raccoon City to find her missing brother and uncover what Umbrella really is getting up to...



RE: DEAD AIM (2003, PS2)
To date, this is the only *Resident Evil* G-Con game developed for the PS2. With super-clean graphics, *Dead Aim* allows both 1st and 3rd person views.



RESIDENT EVIL: OUTBREAK (PS2)
Outbreak will be developed only for PS2! Not yet released, it is scheduled to hit shelves in October, about the same time that *Apocalypse* will hit the big screen.

The Players

While Milla will still play her central role as Alice, her supporting cast are all accomplished actors who have appeared in various roles over the past few years. So, before you see Apocalypse and think, "isn't that the guy from..." let OPS2 give you an early heads up on the who's who in the freaky world of Apocalypse.



ZACK WARD (AS NICHOLAI GINOAEF)

Despite his mother's protests, Zack wanted to act from a young age. His most notable credit is in *Almost Famous* but he was also seen in TV's *Ed* series.



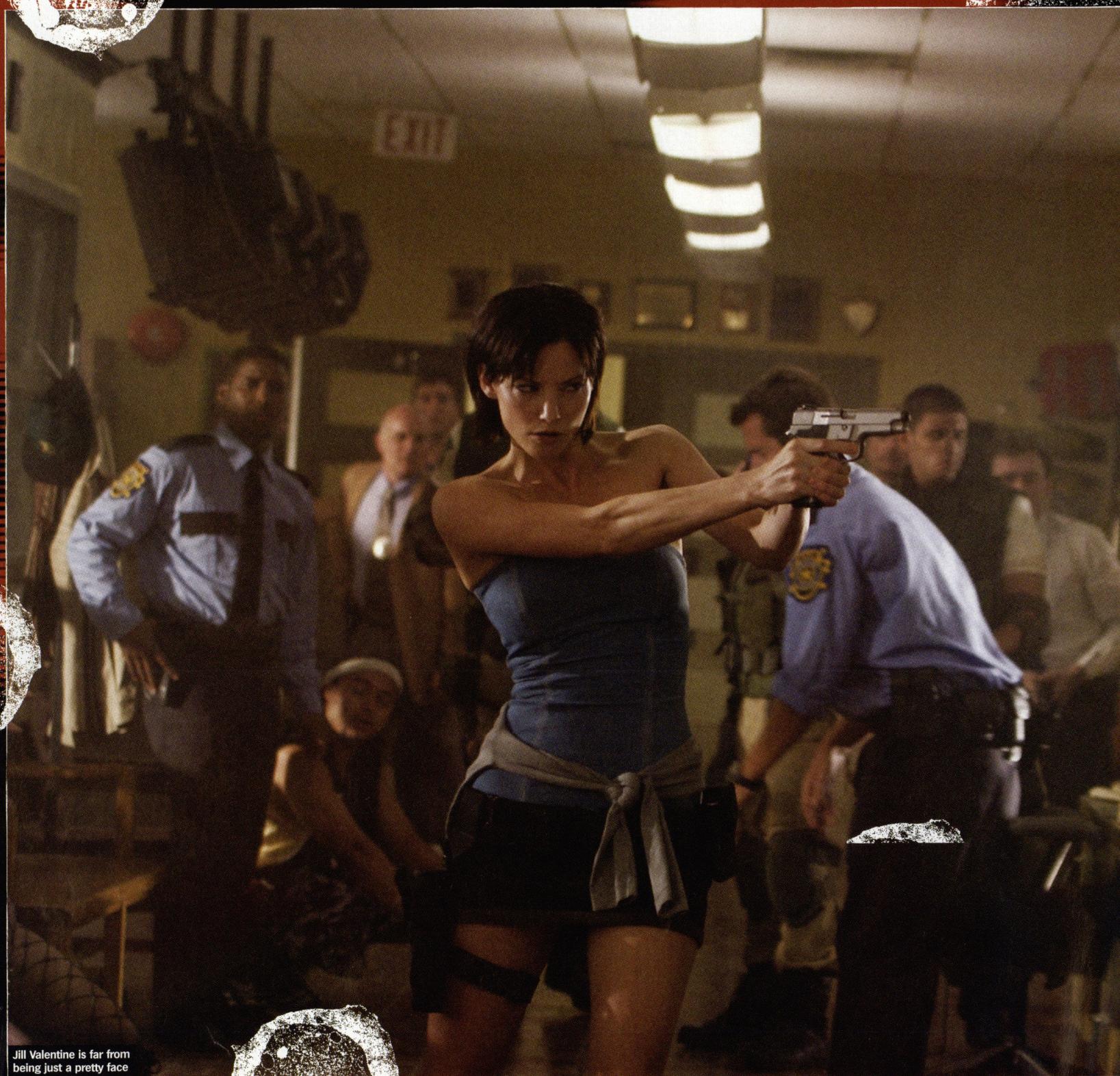
ODED FEHR (AS CARLOS OLIVIERA)

Oded has appeared in *Deuce Bigolo: Male Gigolo* as well as *The Mummy* movies. He also provided a voice for a character in *Champions of Norrath*.



SIENNA GUILLORY (AS JILL VALENTINE)

English-born Sienna is the daughter of Cuban guitarist Isaac Guillory who is known for his work with music luminaries Mick Jagger and Donovan!



Jill Valentine is far from being just a pretty face

Who's It's Miss Valentine

Jill Valentine is widely seen by *Resident Evil* fans as the series' character of all characters. She appeared in both the original *Resident Evil*, as well as *Resident Evil: Nemesis* and is described as an intelligent soldier and someone who fights for what she believes in. Her specialties include picking locks and she is also accomplished in disarming explosive traps. Oh, and for the record Jill is aged 23, 5'5" and weighs in at just 110 lbs.

→ games than they were for their 2002 effort, *Resident Evil*.

Fans of the first movie, and indeed fans of Ms Jovovich will be pleased to hear that she will be returning to play as Alice. Her fiance, Paul W.S. Anderson, who wrote and directed the first movie, has also returned but is no longer sitting in the director's chair. Anderson, who also directed the *Mortal Kombat* movie, did write the Apocalypse script however it is Alexander Witt (who has worked on a plethora of blockbusters like *Gladiator*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Black Hawk Down* and *Lethal Weapon* as director of photography) who has been handed director's duties.

Apocalypse will begin right where the original left off: in the heart of Racoon City. Again, the Umbrella Corporation has been up to no good and has subjected Racoon City's residents (including Alice) to biogenetic experimentation. Fans of the games will note with plenty of interest that many *Resident Evil* characters have been brought back to life to appear in the movie.

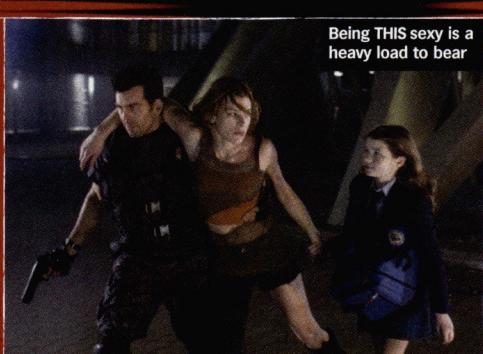
Alice will be joined by none other than Jill Valentine (*Resident Evil*, *Resident Evil: Nemesis*), Carlos Oliviera (a firearms specialist and self-confessed lady's man from *Resident Evil: Nemesis*), Nicholai Ginovaef (Team Sergeant of the Umbrella Biohazard Countermeasure Force from *Resident Evil: Nemesis*) and a new character Terri Morales for the movie. The common clue then, is that all three characters appeared in *Nemesis* and Columbia TriStar have intimated that the likelihood of the Nemesis himself will be appearing in *Apocalypse* for a major showdown! Considering the Nemesis' massive size and the huge arsenal that he carries around – you can expect plenty of action and suspense. The Nemesis provided a real constant, underlying fear throughout the third game in the series as it was unpredictable when he would suddenly appear to attack.

These exclusive shots are just the start of things to come. Be sure to read *OPS2* over the coming months for more *Apocalypse* news and interviews! ▶

Apocalypse will have the trademark RE look



“Fans of the games will note that many characters have been brought back to life”



We wonder is they're looking for keys...



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Ion blaster



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PLAY-TEST

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WELCOME!

What the hell is happening? Mid-year is supposed to be quieter than a gagged mute and, BANG, without warning we get three bigger than Ben Hur-style blockbusters all in the one month. *Driv3r* may

have been in the making for longer than most of us have been playing videogames but boy has it been worth the wait and *Spider-Man 2* is so, so much more than your usual movie spin-off. And don't forget *Athens*. I'm going again, baby!

NARAYAN PATTISON
DEPUTY EDITOR

REVIEW CHARTER

FACT: OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE'S reviews are the best in the business. Our squad of reviewers play the games longer, harder and better than anyone. And we love what we do.

It's this dedication that means you can trust our comments and scores above anyone else's. Whether a game's superb or sewage, our experts will tell it like it is with buckets of opinion. Our experienced reviewers have written for the game industry's most revered publications, both here in Australia and overseas. Rest assured that these are opinions you can trust.

REVIEW RATINGS

HERE'S WHAT OUR REVIEW SCORES STAND FOR:

10/10	Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change the face of gaming forever
09/10	A truly astonishing game. If you have a PlayStation 2, you need this now
08/10	Highly recommended
07/10	Good, solid fare that's definitely well worth a look
06/10	Better than average, and ideal for hardcore fans of the genre
05/10	An average game
04/10	Poor, but still with the odd moment
03/10	Extremely disappointing
02/10	To be avoided
01/10	Beer mat

THE OPS2 AWARDS

We don't hand out high scores for nothing, so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.



The Gold Award is a rare gem and only to be given to games that score that magic 10/10. This score indicates gaming of simply incredible quality!



The Silver Award is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this game now!



The Bronze Award is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.



48

ATHENS 2004

We have muscles aching that we never knew existed – and it's because of this game!



DRIV3R

A brilliant and addictive driving adventure



SPIDER-MAN 2

The movie's great, how 'bout the game?



PRISONER OF AZKABAN

A solid game incorporating EyeToy

62



SHREK 2

Our favourite green monster returns!

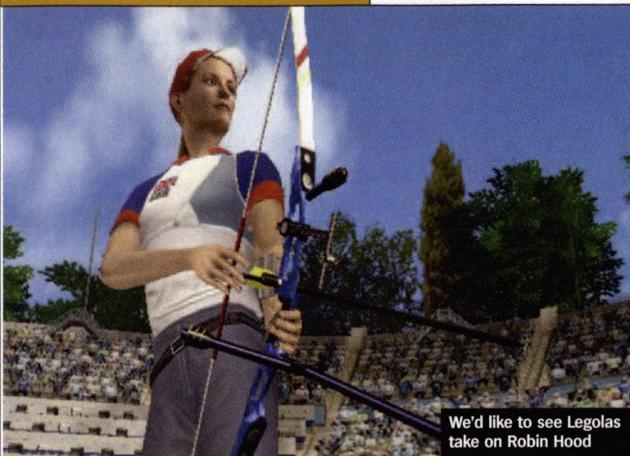
64



SHOWDOWN: LOW

Beefcakes? More like beef jerky!

66



We'd like to see Legolas take on Robin Hood



X SPORTS

ATHENS 2004

The Olympic Games are coming home – time to start training

X DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY
DEVELOPER: EUROCOM
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: JULY
WEBSITE: WWW.AU.PLAYSTATION.COM
60HZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
ONLINE: NO

X BACK STORY

The Olympic Games were first held in Greece over 2,700 years ago, with the modern Olympic Games restarting the tradition in 1896. Olympic videogames are always popular, and this PS2-exclusive title is the only official one for Athens 2004.



Armchair athletes have been giving their fingers a workout every four years since the dawn of videogames, with an ingenious type of game technically known as the "button-basher" or "joystick-wagger". This time around, Sony got its wallet out and bought the rights to give PlayStation 2 owners the only officially licensed videogame of the Athens 2004 Olympics.

These kinds of sport games are designed exclusively for playing with a group of friends. Sure, you can play them on your own, but you'll feel like a bit of a plumb sitting at home on your own, hammering away on a joypad. The real enjoyment comes from the rivalries that build up between friends, the almighty cheer that you naturally release when setting a new Olympic record in front of people, and the cackles of derogatory laughter that come from previously good mates whenever you mess up. So, this one isn't for you, Nigel No-Friends.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

The event line-up in Athens 2004 is the largest ever seen in a game of this type. You get 25 in total: 13 track & field events (running, jumping over stuff, throwing things), four swimming events (not including 'doggy paddle'), four gymnastics events (rolling around on a mat, vaulting over a vault, hanging from rings), plus skeet shooting, archery, weightlifting and even jumping over things on a horse. An impressive cross-section of real-life events, for sure.

Each event plays differently, but a large number involve you demonstrating your strength or speed by alternately tapping the **□** and **○** buttons as quickly as

your poor fingers can handle. It's essential to develop a technique of your own which will give you optimum 'power' whenever an event calls for it, otherwise you'll be going home embarrassingly medal-less. While it can be possible to get extra speed (or at least save finger wear) by using props like pens, coins or woolly gloves, a true virtuallympic champion uses nothing but the body parts they were born with. Keep it real, people!

Naturally, some events work better than others. The sprinting events are basically tests of how fast you can bash, which is nice and simple. The long-distance races

"Bash away 'til your fingers, arms and shoulders ache like never before"

are all to do with pacing yourself, which again works well. The archery is wonderfully simple, and the skeet shooting, although it seems a bit crappy to begin with, is a great test of your reactions. The weightlifting also works well, as to hold a really big weight aloft for the three-second count you need to bash away 'til your fingers, arms and shoulders are all ache like never before.

Some others aren't so hot. The jumping-over-fences-on-a-stupid-horse event, for example. It's just too slow-paced and downright not-a-lot-of-fun. It's also a shame that you don't really get a feeling of interacting properly with a lot of events – the floor exercises simply require

BETTER THAN

SHREK SUPER PARTY

WORSE THAN

ESPN INTRNL TRACK & FIELD 2

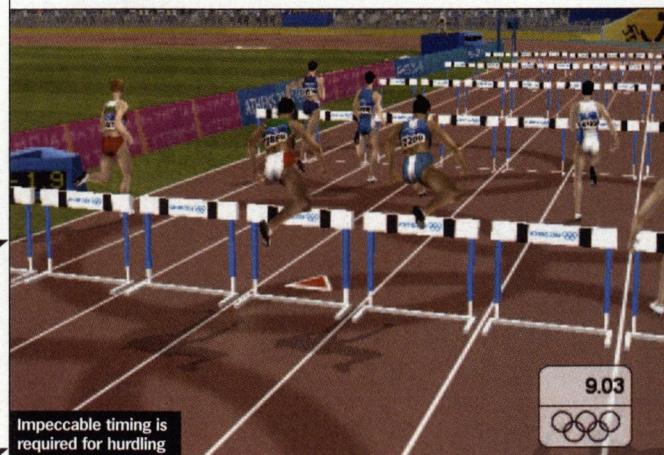
LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

The dance mat option – genius!

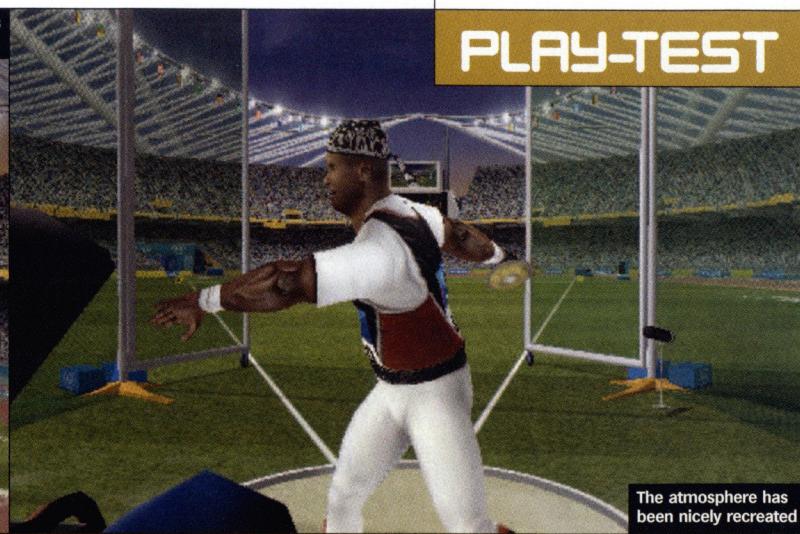
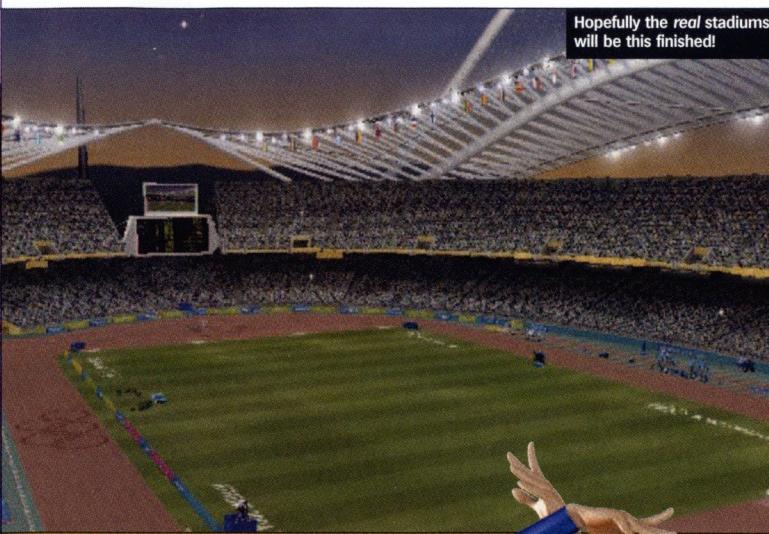
What they need to fix

It'd be nice if you felt like you were a bit more involved in some events.



Impeccable timing is required for hurdling





The atmosphere has been nicely recreated

A LESSON IN MASHING

The most important skill when playing Athens 2004 is being able to hit the \otimes and \circ buttons alternately extremely fast. There are loads of ways to do this, but here are a few of the techniques used by the PS2 team.



STANDARD

This is your basic two-finger technique, where the forefinger and index finger tap alternately. This leaves the other hand free to hit other buttons, or operate the analogue stick.



DRUMMER

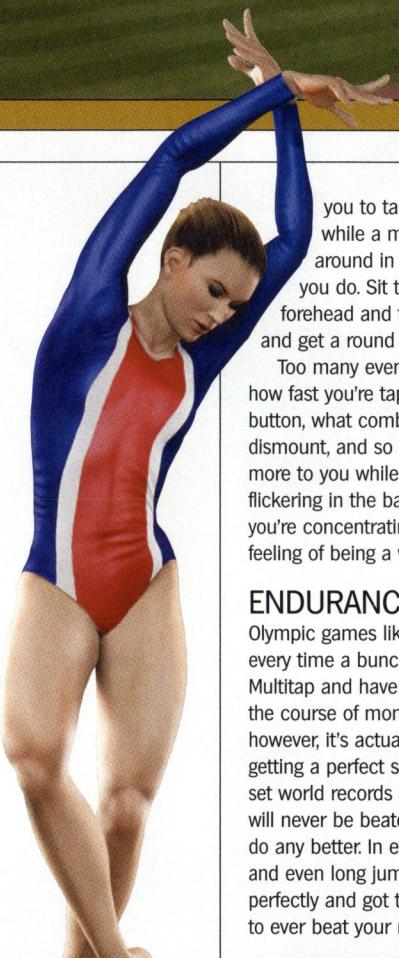
With the pad put on a table or clamped between your legs, you can hammer away on the buttons like a drummer, using one hand for each. A good sense of rhythm helps.



FINGERNAIL

Holding the pad sideways in your left hand, and using the back of your right thumbnail, press down hard between the two buttons and vibrate between them as quickly as possible.

"Why do I always lose?"



you to tap buttons when the screen tells you to, while a man or woman on the screen dances around in a pre-recorded way no matter how well you do. Sit there smacking the pad on your forehead and they'll still pull off amazing somersaults and get a round of applause from the crowd.

Too many events rely on screen displays showing you how fast you're tapping, when you should press the 'jump' button, what combination to tap in to do a perfect dismount, and so on – your actual athlete is often nothing more to you while playing than some multicoloured flickering in the background behind the on-screen display you're concentrating on. It really distances you from the feeling of being a world-class athlete.

ENDURANCE RACE

Olympic games like this can last forever when done well – every time a bunch of mates come over, you whip out the Multitap and have a competition, often getting better over the course of months or even years. In Athens 2004, however, it's actually possible to 'clock' most events by getting a perfect score. By our second day of play, we'd set world records on 80% of the events – some of which will never be beaten, as the game won't physically let you do any better. In events such as weightlifting, pole vault, and even long jump you can tell when you've performed perfectly and got the highest score possible, making trying to ever beat your record pointless.

One thing that annoyed us was the terrible commentary – it often talks about how dreadfully you're doing when you're half a lap ahead of the competition, plus there aren't separate comments for men and women. Instead, the commentator only refers to people as "they" or "the person in lane 4", which is lazy. There are no national anthems either, which is a shame – when you get a gold medal, you just get a look at the flag being raised, and that's it.

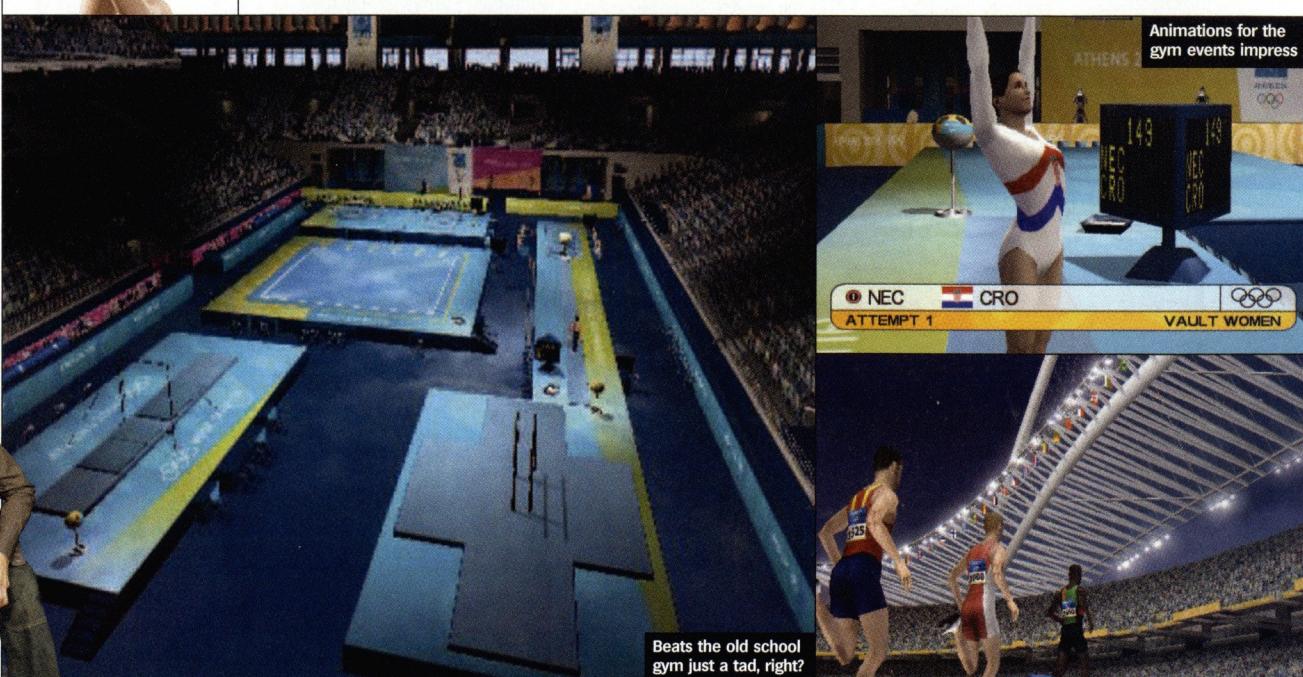
But these are only missed opportunities, rather than major problems. For a group of people wanting a few hours' screaming laughter, it's essential, especially while the actual Olympics are on. The option to play with dance mats is an hilarious revelation, and unless you're a gamer who wants to try for unbelievable world records, you'll never notice the limitations of certain events. **Ed Lomas**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	05	Mostly pretty bad – very simple
Sound	05	Very poor commentary, weak sound effects
Gameplay	07	Some events are great, awesome multiplayer
Lifespan	06	Fun for a short while, but limited repeat play

The perfect multiplayer game for the next month or two. It's not a classic sports game though.

06

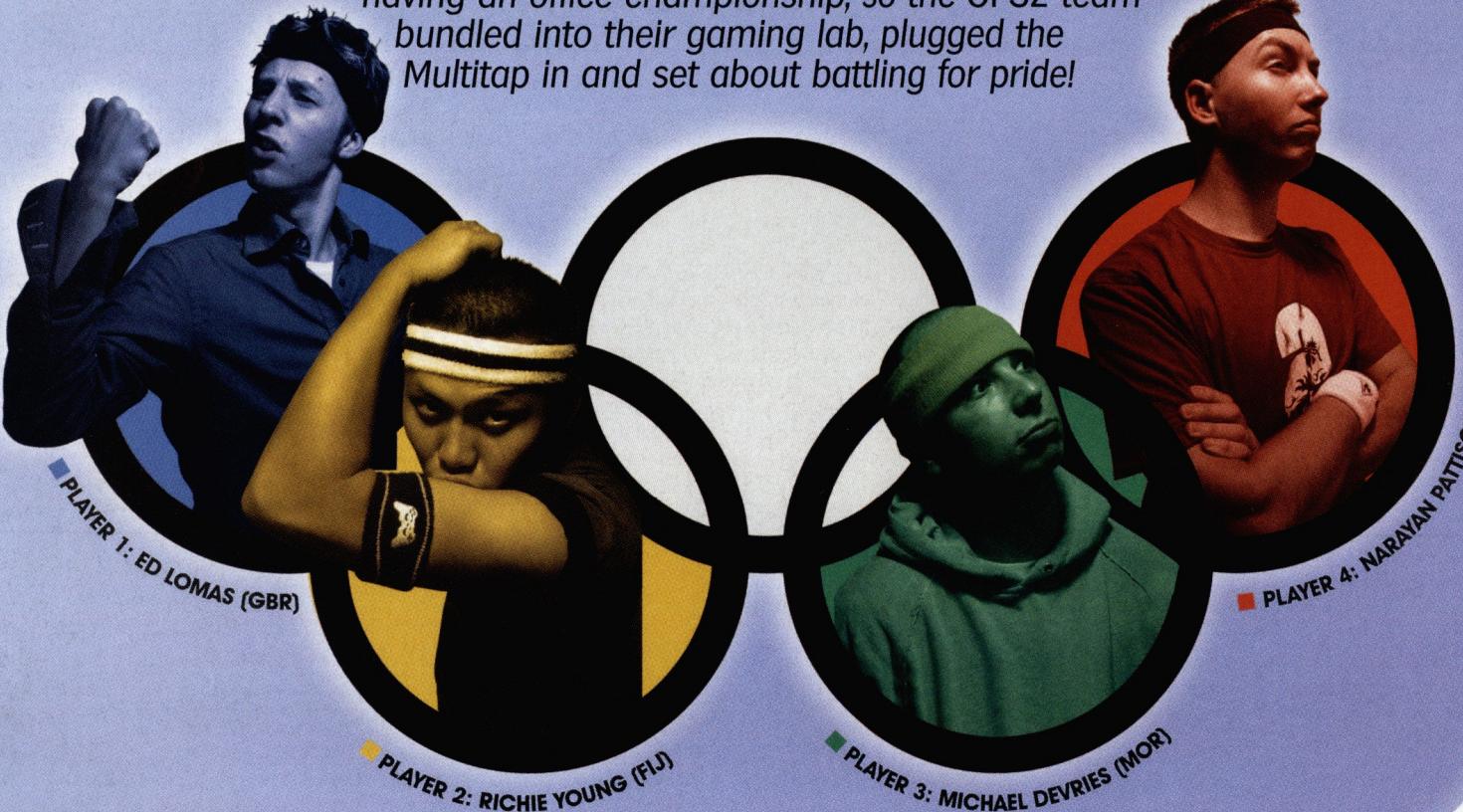


Animations for the gym events impress

**PLAY
IT NOW!**
ON THE PLAYABLE
DEMO DISC!

THE XXIIMIXXI OPS2 OLYMPIAD

There's no better way to test an Olympic game than by having an office championship, so the OPS2 team bundled into their gaming lab, plugged the Multitap in and set about battling for pride!



REEAADY • SEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEET • MASH!

DANCIN' FOR GOLD



Sony has included one particularly smart bonus feature – if you happen to own a dance mat or four. You can play Athens 2004 with them. The game recognises when they're plugged in and optimises the controls so that you can perform the 100M by running as fast as possible on the spot, or the floor exercises by dancing around on the mat. It's excellent fun, although it proved the OPS2 team to be spectacularly unfit as we needed to have a sit down and a cup of tea between each event to catch our breath.

EVENT 1: 100M

CONTROLS A straightforward speed challenge to kick things off – simply hold L1 on the starting line, release it when the gun goes off, then hammer the **X** and **○** buttons as quickly as possible to dash for the finish line.



They're under starter's orders... and they're off! Everyone's away cleanly, and they're sprinting – a good start from Michael. Narayan's slipping behind, Ed and Richie are at the front, but here comes Michael – my goodness, that's going to be a photograph for the first three places! "I think I got it!" shouts an excited Richie... and he's right! A time of 10.10 seconds sees him finish one hundredth of a second ahead of Ed, with Michael another one hundredth behind him. Narayan makes fourth place, but another two tenths of a second behind.

An extremely close start to the championship there – it looks like we could be in for quite a night here at OPS2 Stadium!

EVENT 2: 1500M

They're off, and most of the runners seem to be pacing themselves nicely. Except for Richie, who's chosen to take an early lead. But with only one lap completed, he's already starting to tire and is slipping back through the pack rapidly. Naz steps up to take a lead, and Ed

CONTROLS Very different the sprinting events, this. The right analogue stick is used to control speed, with a heart monitor at the top of the screen showing your racer's stamina. Save enough energy and you get the chance to sprint at the end.



picks up the pace to stay close behind. Michael's runner isn't even on the screen any more, and he's looking confused. Coming into the last lap, and everyone's remaining stamina is doubled, ready to be triggered as a last-minute sprint. Naz chooses to break away on the last bend, but soon slows, giving Ed the chance to use his sprint and overtake as they enter the

final straight, roaring away to a 15-second victory and a new Olympic Record of 3.31.20. Naz gets second, Richie third, and Michael strolls home a whole minute and a half later, still looking confused.

EVENT 3: 110M HURDLES

"Man, this is hard!" says Richie as the players read the instructions and settle into the starting blocks. But they're away, and Richie takes an immediate flying lead as the other three players run straight into their first hurdle and fall over. But at the 60-metre mark Richie's lead is slipping away. Ed's found his rhythm and is speeding over hurdles... but it's not still enough to beat the computer-controlled racers. He finishes in third place overall, with Richie in a disappointing sixth, Naz in seventh and Michael in eighth.

CONTROLS Exactly the same the 100M, only you need to hit L1 at the correct time to jump over each hurdle as you approach it.



Fence sitters never perform when it comes to hurdles



EVENT 4: LONG JUMP



This event is particularly fun with the dancemat

CONTROLS A button-bashing run-up is required to set your jumper's speed, before one carefully timed press of the L1 button launch yourself into the air at the right time.

A button-bashing run-up is required to set your jumper's speed, before one carefully timed press of the L1 button launch yourself into the air at the right time. Ed's first jump is weak – 7.75 metres – and Richie's even weaker 6.59 metres caused problems. But now Naz steps up to the track and, from out of nowhere, he's pulled off an incredible jump of 9.06 metres – a new World Record! "Textbook! Good luck beating that, suckers!" he bellows, before shutting up as Michael instantly beats his score with a beautiful 9.10-metre jump, only to see the disqualification flag. Back to Naz, now, who gets up plenty of speed... but he's forgotten to jump, and is running straight through the sand, swearing as he goes. More fouls from Michael and Ed,

and a solid 8.90-metre

jump from Richie, and my, oh my, Naz does it again – this time getting full power on his run-up and timing his jump brilliantly to make 9.28 metres – a new world record. Michael tries to rise to the challenge, but the pressure's just too much.

EVENT 5: JAVELIN



Replay

CONTROLS Firstly, button-bashing is required to set your athlete's running speed, then the analogue stick is used to set a throwing angle, and the L1 button is used to time the actual throw.

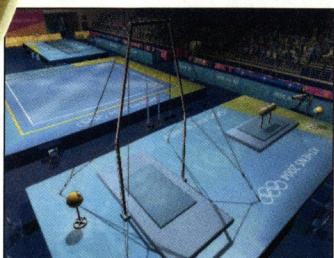
Button-bashing sets your athlete's speed, then the stick is used to set a throwing angle, and the L1 button is used to time the throw. Ed's up first, but he fouls, looking puzzled. The other guys all manage to get their first throws off, with Michael coming off best, with 77 metres. A few more fouls before Naz lets out an almighty "Yeah!", to celebrate a throw of 78.32 metres. Looks like Ed's got the hang of things as we move into the last round, coming out with an impressive 89.92 metres. Richie throws a potential record-breaker, only to step over the line, meaning the event finishes with Ed taking first, Naz in second, Richie in fifth, and Michael bringing up the rear in seventh.

EVENT 6: RINGS

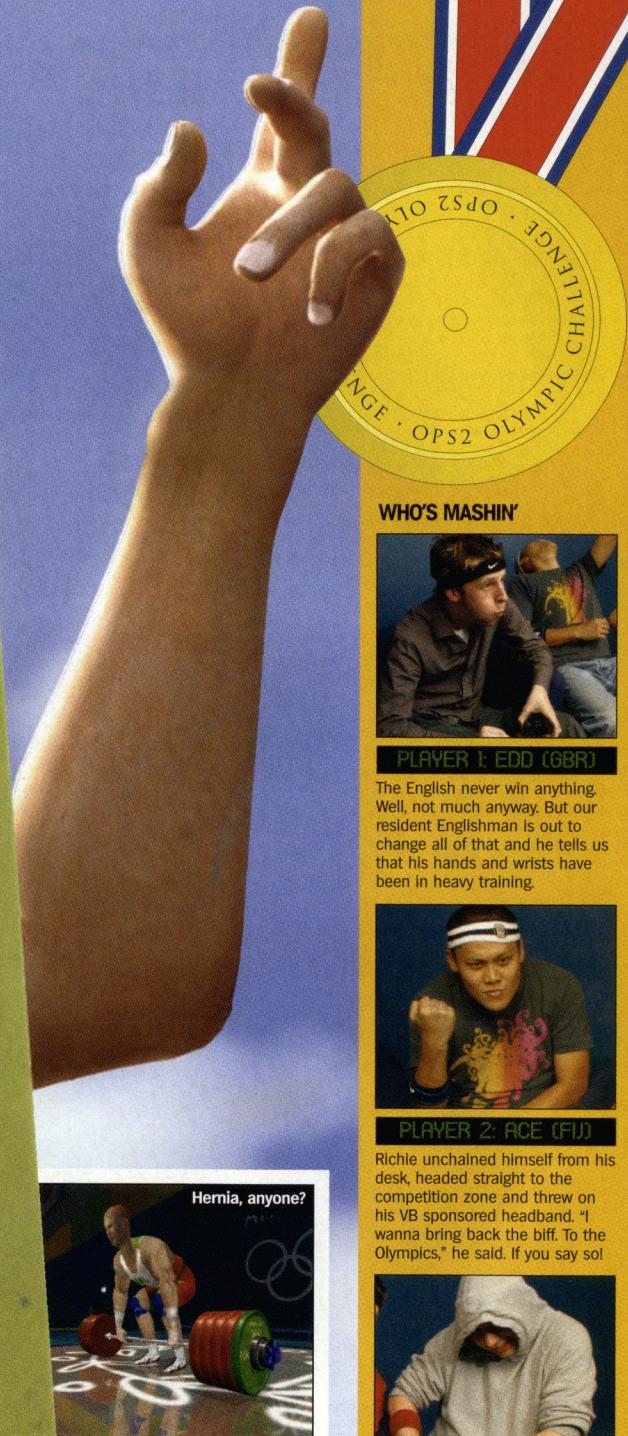
"This should be good," says Naz as everyone reads the controls. "Anything that stops Ed using his cheesy button-bashing method..." Again, Ed starts the event, choosing 'Silver' difficulty then spending most of his attempt going "Eh? What does



that mean?", but finishes well, taking a score of 8.21. Richie demonstrates some immaculate stick control, earning a number of 'Perfect' comments from the game, before a spot-on dismount gives him an overall score of 9.11. Naz doesn't fare so well. As he rattles his way through a number of sloppy manoeuvres, he repeatedly swears at the top of his voice, with words like 'Bad' and 'Awful' flashing up on the screen – which scores him 7.50. Michael does okay, but misses out on getting a single button right for his dismount, earning him a lowly 7.00.



CONTROLS A tricky event, this, with a series of strength and skill tests requiring delicate positioning of the analogue sticks, rapid tapping of the L1 and R1 buttons, and keying in sequences of buttons as quickly as possible.



WHO'S MASHIN'



PLAYER 1: EDD (GBR)

The English never win anything. Well, not much anyway. But our resident Englishman is out to change all of that and he tells us that his hands and wrists have been in heavy training.



PLAYER 2: ACE (FJD)

Richie unchained himself from his desk, headed straight to the competition zone and threw on his VB sponsored headband. "I wanna bring back the biff. To the Olympics," he said. If you say so!



A test of button-mashing endurance, this one, with rapid pummelling making a power bar rise, and presses of the L1 button performing the 'Clean' and 'Jerk' lifts. Three seconds of tapping is needed to keep the weight in the air.

PLAYER 3: MLD (MOR)

"Risin' up, back on the streets. Did my time, took my chances. Went the distance now I'm back on my feet. Just a man and his will to survive. You trade your passion for glory. It's the eye of the tiger..."



PLAYER 1: NAZ (AUS)

Narayan walks from his house to his car and then 50m from his car to OPS2 Towers so he knows how to exercise baby. He's hoping to translate all that hard work with a big victory in Athens 2004.

EVENT 7: WEIGHTLIFTING

Ed goes for a big opening lift of 240kg, using his patented 'reverse fingernail' technique, but an accidental hit of L1 means he doesn't even get the weights off the floor. Richie just holds on to a nice 230kg, Naz falls tragically, much to Richie's delight, and Michael constantly has trouble with the pad, repeatedly hitting a shoulder button by accident, making him fall immediately every time. The rest of the rounds feature a bitter Richie/Naz rivalry which sees



both of them repeatedly fail to hold onto any weights, all the while laughing loudly at one another's failures. Ed gets the hang of things and goes on to set a world record of 265kg while complaining that his fingernail smells of burning, leaving poor Michael and Naz with 0 points for the event overall. "Is this the actual competition or just a warm-up?" asks Michael innocently...

EVENT 8: ARCHERY

For the archery, players are divided into pairs. Ed and Richie go head-to-head in some serious wind (which they constantly complain about), and Richie immediately falls behind with a few wild arrows thumping into the 7-point red circle. He battles back through some dreadful Ed shots, including a 4 – the worst anyone's ever got, but still finishes four points behind. The Naz vs Michael round is considerably higher scoring, even though Naz cockily plays through the first round while on the phone. "Yeah... sorry, I'm doing a tournament at work", he casually says into his mobile, occasionally swearing as he misses the gold centre circles. But no matter how many times Richie protests "That's an eight, not a nine!", Naz still finishes in first place with 103 points, just one point ahead of an impressively on-form Michael.

CONTROLS Aim a slightly wobbly sight at an ever-shrinking target, taking into account the wind (as indicated by a fluttering flag), and press the **X** button to fire.



EVENT 9: FLOOR

CONTROLS Music plays, a young lady dances around, and players need to tap the four face buttons in time with a bunch of arrows moving up the screen. It's exactly the same as the Dancing Stage arcade games, basically.



Could this be Nadia?

"I hate dancing games," whines Ed as the event starts, but still puts in an okay performance, earning 8.42 for his ham-fisted attempt. Richie scores 8.16 on his go, complaining that he "can't do it when you have to press two buttons at once" because he uses his thumb rather than his fingers. Naz's attempt is filled with 'Perfect' messages, but a few nasty mistakes leave him with an overall score of 8.34, and Michael goes all-out by selecting the Gold difficulty. This results in a terrifying flood of arrows zooming up the screen, which Michael bravely battles through, earning a respectable 8.14 points for his efforts.

EVENT 10: SKEET SHOOTING

CONTROLS Dotted lines show the flight path the clay pigeons will follow, and you simply need to move your gun left and right along the path, pressing **△** to fire. You only get one shot at each clay, so accuracy and timing are essential.

"I'm going to win this one," says Naz boldly. "If it weren't for the weightlifting, I could've won the whole tournament." Richie and Naz have built up quite an intense rivalry by this event, and a disastrous start from Naz (who misses his first six shots) prompts him to swear louder than ever (and that's no mean feat) and punch the chair he's sitting on repeatedly like it were nothing but a limp beanbag!



Life's tough working at OPS2 Towers

Ed takes an early lead with some consistently average shooting, while Michael performs incredibly on the second round to keep in contention. Naz and Richie both get a perfect third round as the action heats up. Ed misses a round entirely while busy eating a chocolate bar; Michael complains that "it's hard from this angle" as he's sitting off to the left of the TV, and the event finishes with Naz throwing his pad to the floor as he finishes third behind Ed and Richie, with Michael coming last following a complete collapse over the final rounds. Overall a pretty hopeless effort from everyone but at least it's only another four years until we get to do it all over again.



At least he's not 'shooting' with the cycling team



Remember not to fall in this time Thorpey!

FINAL RESULTS



So, not quite the ultimate display of sportsmanship and skill that we might have hoped for. In the end, a computer-controlled character from Gambia has won the 2004 OPS2 office championship, with Ed following him in second place, Richie in sixth, Naz in seventh, and Michael in eighth. We've put in a request with Sony to have the Gambian polygon man extracted from the game and employed as the new editor of Official PlayStation 2 Magazine, as he's clearly far more capable than any of us.

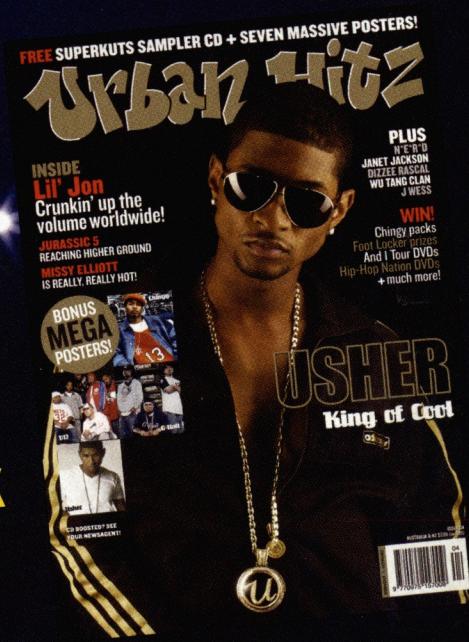




ISSUE 5
ON SALE
AUGUST

Urban Hitz

YOUR OFFICIAL R&B AND HIP-HOP POSTER BOOK



**X DETAILS**

DISTRIBUTOR: **ATARI**
DEVELOPER: **REFLECTIONS**
PRICE: **\$99.95**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
WEBSITE: WWW.ATARI.COM/DRIV3R/
60Hz MODE: **YES**
WIDESCREEN: **YES**
SURROUND SOUND: **YES**
ONLINE: **NO**

X BACK STORY

After two successful entries in the Driver series on PSone, Reflections took a couple of years off to work on the impressive but ultimately unsuccessful Stuntman for PS2. Reflections may have made us wait a long time for Driv3r but it has delivered a truly next-generation sequel.

X DRIVING/ACTION**DRIV3R**

Has Grand Theft Auto's reign finally ended?

After the huge impact the Grand Theft Auto series has had, it's easy to forget that the Driver series combined on-foot and driving missions in a 3D environment long before GTA ever did. Well, the original action driving game is back, and with three massive cities to lay waste to, a big-name Hollywood cast and the most cinematic car chases we've ever seen, it might just have the grunt to knock GTA off the road.

Driv3r casts you in the role of brutal undercover cop Tanner, who's on the tail of a gang of international car thieves. It's a little ironic that a you're chasing car thieves in a game that lets you steal any car you want, and the storyline does get a little confusing at times but really, the plot is just an excuse to give us all sorts of action-packed missions – and we're definitely down with that.

FALSE START

Whatever you do, don't judge Driv3r by the first 25 minutes of gameplay. Things kick off decently with a stylish CG intro movie but then the excitement factor plummets when the gameplay begins. Tanner starts off in his waterside house – which is lovely – but it isn't half as cool as an adrenaline pumping shoot-out or a good car chase. Things don't get much better when we're asked to take a leisurely drive to the police station for some target practise at the shooting range.

When the first real mission begins we do get a thrilling car chase to participate in, but the difficulty is excruciatingly unforgiving. Make one wrong turn or hit one streetlight and you'll be looking at the dreaded "Mission Failed" screen. The second mission dishes up an identical serving of

BETTER THAN

THE GETAWAY
WORSE THAN
GTA: VICE CITY

LAB TEST**What they nailed this time**

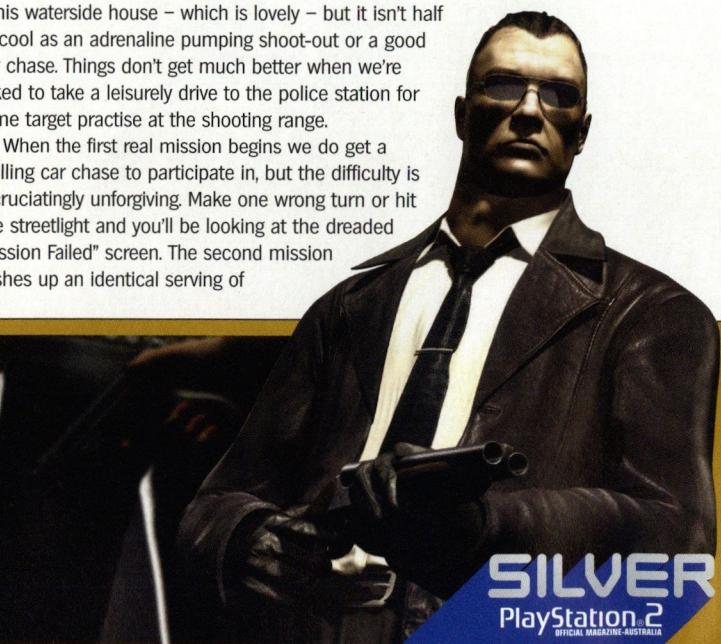
Realistic cars, devastating weaponry and meaty explosions

What they need to fix

The unforgiving time limits – please let us crash once and recover next time

HOLLYWOOD TALENT

If you had a cast of Hollywood heavyweights like Michael Madsen, Ving Rhames, Michelle Rodriguez and Mickey Rourke signed on would you want to waste their talents with clunky in-game cut-scenes? Driv3r's CGI cut-scenes are some of the most slickly produced we've seen and feature everything from intense car pileups and blazing shoot-outs to arty close-ups of characters' feet and a trademark Madsen torture scene. The story is quite compelling, and it's largely due to the effort put in by this cast. Getting to the next level is challenging but the cut-scenes make you want to get there.



SILVER
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE - AUSTRALIA



frustrating car chases with exactly the same unforgiving aftertaste. So there you have it, 20 minutes in and *Driv3r* is all about frustrating, repetitive gameplay and a bad case of *déjà vu* thanks to its *Grand Theft Auto Vice City*-style Miami setting.

However, just as we were crying onto each other's shoulders and beginning to come to terms with the massive disappointment that *Driv3r* was, something incredible happened. We got to the third mission and the gameplay stopped being about control pad-snapping car chases and started offering up stylish cinematic action on par with Hollywood's best.

Driv3r's next batch of missions all seem to be inspired by great games and movies. First up there's a *Stuntman*-style mission that sees you barrelling through a construction yard, using your car to destroy the place by smashing through flimsy shacks, making roadkill out of the security guards and hitting as many explosive barrels as possible. Next up is a homage to *The Blues Brothers* that sees you speeding through a shopping centre, dodging ice cream stands and watching the police cars plough into shopfronts. Some of our other favourites include a *Gone in 60 Seconds*-flavoured mission in which you have to steal three cars and drive them into the back of a moving truck before it can drive across town, and a *Speed*-inspired mission that has you desperately trying to keep your car above 80kmph to stop a bomb from blowing your car off the road. The missions may not be overly original but when they're based on highlights from so many movies, what you get is one hell of a roller coaster of non-stop action.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

At this point you could be forgiven for thinking the game plays exactly like *Vice City*. There are definitely a lot of similarities. Both games involve third-person action in big cities, with all the stealing, crashing and shooting at cars that you can handle. The main difference is in the presentation. Whereas *Vice City* favours an almost cartoonish style, *Driv3r* goes for realistic visuals in an attempt to recreate the look of an action movie. And you'll notice the difference, especially when you're unloading a machinegun into an enemy car. Every bullet that hits a car shatters windows, blows out tyres and punches through panels, leaving individual bullet holes. Pull out a grenade launcher and you'll really get to see what the cars are made of because a direct hit will literally blow a car to pieces, sending tyres and panels sailing past you.

This intention to let you destroy everything with your weapons extends to pretty much everything in the environment. If an object isn't nailed down then you can expect to knock it all over the place with your weapons. And rather than being a cool gimmick, this allows you to get the drop on enemies. If some punk is hiding behind a barrel you can just shoot his cover out of the way, then make a lead salad out of him.

The crims you face off against are smarter than the average collection of polygons too. As well as ducking behind cover when they need to reload, they will dodge when you are shooting them and hide in new places on different mission attempts.

Pedestrians show a surprising amount of intelligence too. Wimpier citizens will abandon their cars and flee the moment they see you walking around a corner with an assault rifle, while others will stand their ground and pull their own gun if you try and touch their car.

The third-person shooting in *Driv3r* feels nice and easy thanks to a dual stick control method that lets you run and strafe with one stick while aiming with the other. This allows you to peek around corners and aim where you want from third-person. And for those who fancy a first-person view, all weapons can be fired from this perspective. Even better, your feet aren't nailed to the ground while using the first-person view, giving you the choice to play the entire game from this perspective.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

As we mentioned before, *Driv3r*'s car-based missions punish you cruelly for the slightest error. To call them unforgiving would be the understatement of the year. To the game's credit, no matter how many times you have to retry a mission, you always feel to fight back and refuse to let the game beat you. And to make the chases feel that little bit more realistic and less scripted, the cars you pursue often head down different streets to throw you off.

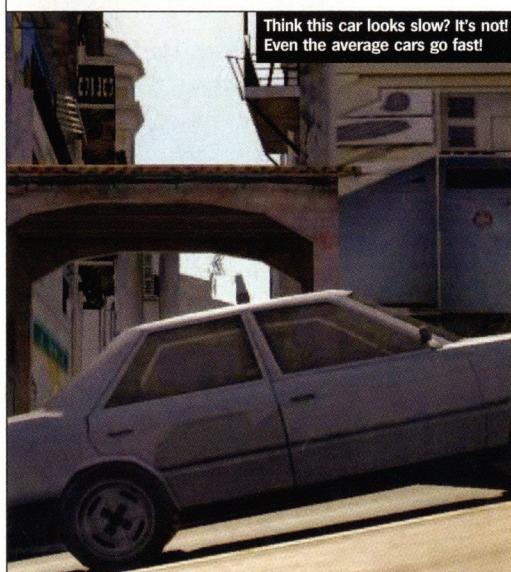
"No matter how many times you have to retry a mission, you feel compelled to fight back"

As well as the standard pursuit missions, you'll sometimes have a buddy in the passenger seat who will lean out the window and fire a machinegun at the car you're chasing. Although most driving missions involve a variation of the two above, there are plenty of others involving speedboats, smashing through roadblocks with semi trailers, losing police tails and stealing cars. There are also occasional on-rails missions that see you playing gunner as you shoot enemy cars trying to ram your buddy's car off the road.

On-foot missions, while not as prominent as the driving missions, still play a large part in *Driv3r*. What's best about these missions is the number of ways in which you can approach them. Most of the time you will have arrived at a location by car, which you must then shoot your way into. Towards the end of one mission we needed to escape from a dock area. After dodging a number of enemy vans trying to block our path, a huge truck pulled across the narrow road, cutting our path off

HOME MOVIES

After each mission you're given the opportunity to watch a replay of the entire thing, featuring every gunshot and powerslide. You can choose exactly where you place the camera during each scene. Got up onto two wheels then smashed your tyres into the face of a policeman? Why not choose an angle to give you a cop's-eye view? Fancy adding some slo-mo or a motion blur? Go for it, you're the director! After you've finished you can save your cinematic masterpieces for showing off to your friends.



Think this car looks slow? It's not! Even the average cars go fast!

HOW THEY STACK UP

Other games in Driv3r's genre are staggeringly huge and ridiculously popular, so we thought it would be easier on you if we weighed up all the pros and cons



DRIV3R		THE GETAWAY		TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA		GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY	
GRAPHICS	The character models and animation are weak but the visuals have an impressively realistic quality to them	9	Amazing backgrounds are let down by appalling animation	8	The characters look great and the backgrounds are solid but the cars look lame	8	Blocky, cartoonish characters spoil an otherwise great-looking game
DRIVING	Easily the best of the bunch – it's <i>Gran Turismo</i> in a city	10	Solid driving mechanics but a slim selection of cars	8	The cars handle unrealistically but there are some great aggressive driving skills that can be learned	8	A little on the arcade side but thoroughly enjoyable
ACTION	A dual-stick control method makes shooting a breeze	9	Fiddly controls and a lack of crosshairs or health bars make it very frustrating	6	The best of the lot – <i>Max Payne</i> -style slo-mo shoot-outs and great hand-to-hand combat	10	The auto-aiming is a little dodgy but there's a fantastic variety of action
DEPTH	Hardly any secrets but replaying the missions and making your own movies will keep you busy	9	Lots of missions but once they're complete there's little left	7	You can build up your fighting, shooting and driving skills but there's little outside of the missions	7	Bigger than Ben Hur – you could play this for a year and not see everything
FREEDOM	There are multiple ways to approach many missions but overall it's pretty rigid	7	It's their way or the highway – the worst of the lot	4	The 'choose your own adventure' structure is interesting but it doesn't add much real freedom	7	An almost limitless amount of ways you can tackle missions is the secret of GTA's appeal
OVERALL	The second best driving/action game available comes highly recommended	44	A compelling story and some great graphics can't hide the frustrating gameplay	33	Fantastic shooting and fighting mechanics make this enjoyable but shallow	40	Not without problems but its immense criminal playground offers endless fun

completely. The first time we played through the mission we jumped out of the car, hammered the truck's cab with bullets, then tried to blow it up by giving it another volley of bullets. While this is entirely possible with normal cars, trucks are too solid and cannot be blown up. Using a bit of lateral thinking we drove our car alongside it, jumped on top of our car, then we jumped on top of the truck's cab and made good our escape. During the next run through the mission one of the enemy vans got lucky and rammed

our car into the water. To our surprise Tanner splashed to the surface and we realised we were able to simply swim across the narrow bay to the other side and escape.

A later mission in which we had to sneak into a seaside car yard offered up a similar choice of approaches. The first time we ran into the yard through a hole in the fence, climbed up on top of the building, shot out one of the skylights and dropped in on the witless car thieves. Remembering our swimming skills, the next time we were able to sneak into the yard by swimming

underneath, via an open drain and climb up in the middle of the yard.

These sorts of choices extend to the driving missions too. Our objective was to stop a truck before it got to its destination. The obvious way is to take the long winding road but a better solution is to cut onto the grass and use a nearby jump to sail over a fence and land in front of the truck, allowing you to shoot the driver and stop the truck far more quickly.

Sometimes a simple stray bullet is all that's needed to make a mission play out entirely differently. When firing at a stolen car we were chasing, a few bullets that missed their target pelted into an oncoming car's tyre, causing it to swerve out of control and smash into the stolen car, stopping it dead. Now that's cool!

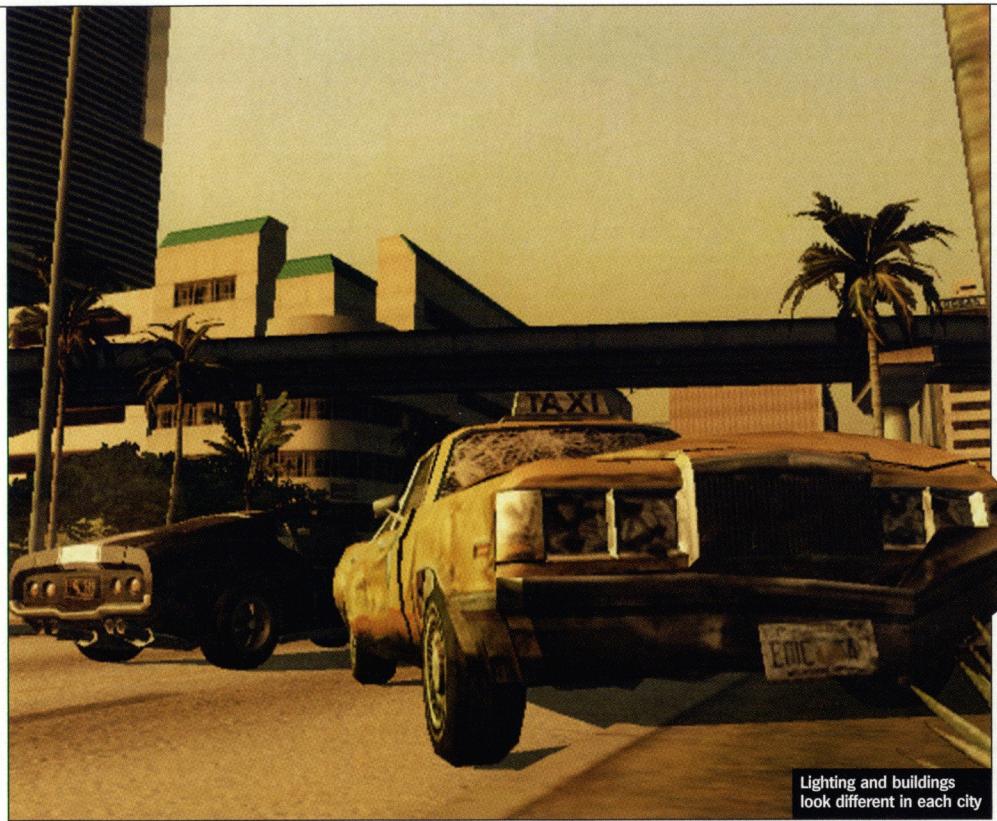
THREE TIMES THE FUN

Where all the previous games in this genre have offered up one big city to explore, Driv3r triples your driving pleasure with three complete cities – Miami, Nice and Istanbul. And if you had any doubts about these cities being made up of a couple of small districts, try these stats on for size. Driv3r's environments consist of more than 30,000 separate buildings and over 150 miles of main roads. On top of this there's also a wealth of back alleys, shortcuts and open land to explore. Disappointingly, the limited secrets and the purely mission-based structure of the game mean you're never really encouraged to explore the cities but there's definitely no shortage of new routes to discover. And although GTA: San Andreas' recent announcement (that it will not only include three cities but also an entire state) is bound to steal a little of Driv3r's thunder, it's still an impressively large and varied setting for the game's action.

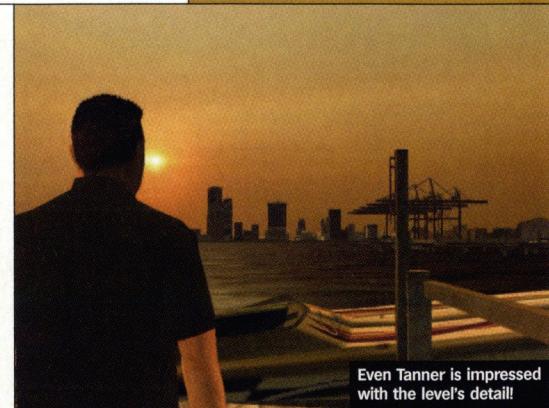
While Driv3r lacks Vice City's wealth of hidden items and crazy side missions, you should have no concern about its depth and long-term appeal. Driv3r features a very cool mode which lets you direct, then save, replays of entire missions. Giving the game a more open and longer lasting appeal, you can also

Spectacular driving action is the staple diet

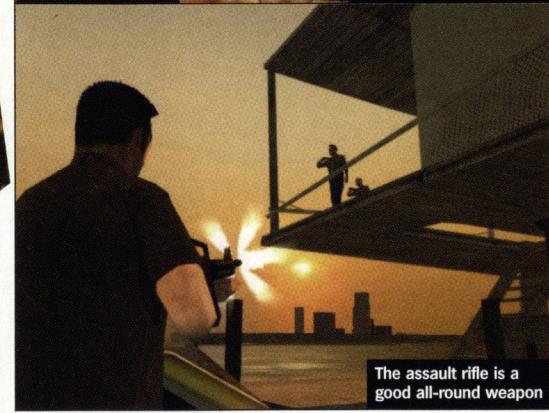




Lighting and buildings look different in each city



Even Tanner is impressed with the level's detail!



The assault rifle is a good all-round weapon

select to replay any completed missions whenever you want. *Ronin* eat your heart out!

The bulk of *Driv3r*'s replay factor comes from the driving mini-games. These are separate to the main adventure and offer up brief challenges like chasing down a target car, checkpoint races and surviving for as long as possible with a squad of police cars ramming you. What's even better is that each one of the six driving games can be selected from a wealth of different courses across each of the three cities.

Driv3r fails to match *Vice City* in terms of freedom, variety and humour, but when it comes to pure driving and shooting action it goes above and beyond Rockstar's classic. And considering *Vice City* is currently the best game on PS2, that's a pretty big compliment. □ **Narayan Pattison**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	09	Weak animation but stunning cars and backgrounds
Sound	09	A solid soundtrack and spot-on effects
Gameplay	08	Frustrating and brilliant in equal measures
Lifespan	09	It doesn't take forever but still, there's plenty here

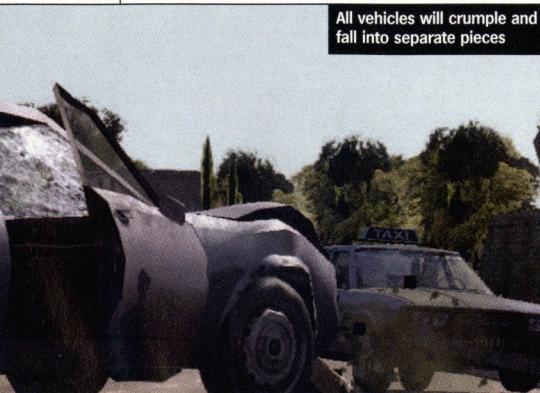
Fast cars, slick shooting, huge cities and cinematic action make this one of the best action games on PS2!

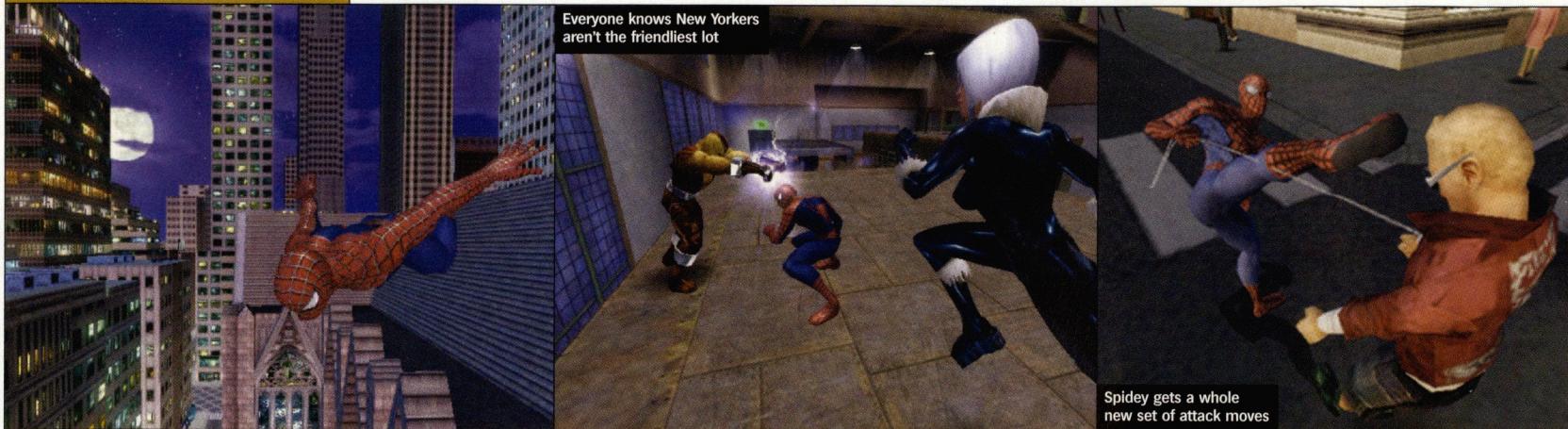
09



"Move the Torana so I can get to the Commodore"

All vehicles will crumple and fall into separate pieces





X ADVENTURE

SPIDER-MAN 2

Spidey returns for more Mary Jane

X DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER: TREYARCH
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.ACTIVISION.COM/MICROSITE/SPIDER-MAN
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES
ONLINE: NO

X BACK STORY

Formed in 1996, Treyarch's first game was a PC title called *Die by the Sword*, which they later complimented with a sequel, *DBTS: Limb from Limb*. They were then purchased by Activision and have since produced *Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer*, *Minority Report* and the *Spider-Man* movie games.

In reality, most of us aren't lovers or fighters, heroes or icons, or individuals of rare worth. Perhaps we can perform the odd goose-ball trick, like hammering a nail into our nasal cavity, or squeezing our hands together and making a farting sound. Perhaps we're even good at our day-to-day job, can manage our relationships, and have a reasonable notion of self and purpose. But as far as the rest of the world goes, we ain't squat. If, however, we were to find ourselves radically enhanced, possessing the strength of ten men, the reflexes of a steel trap, and the ability to swing around cities rather than take the bus, we'd feel a lot better about or place in the world. We could help people – and woo women while doing it. The truth is we all want to be Spider-Man, and Activision's brand new Spidey game is a comic-book-to-game ego orgasm, allowing you to control New York's red wall clinger in a GT3-ish version of the Big Apple that lets you do what you want, went you want to. Play this for a few hours and you'll believe you've got a red lycra suit on under your shirt and pants.

BASED ON THE BLOCKBUSTER

Being hip to all things pop culture, we'll presume you know this latest third-person action/adventure game is based on the *Spider-Man* film sequel, starring Tobey

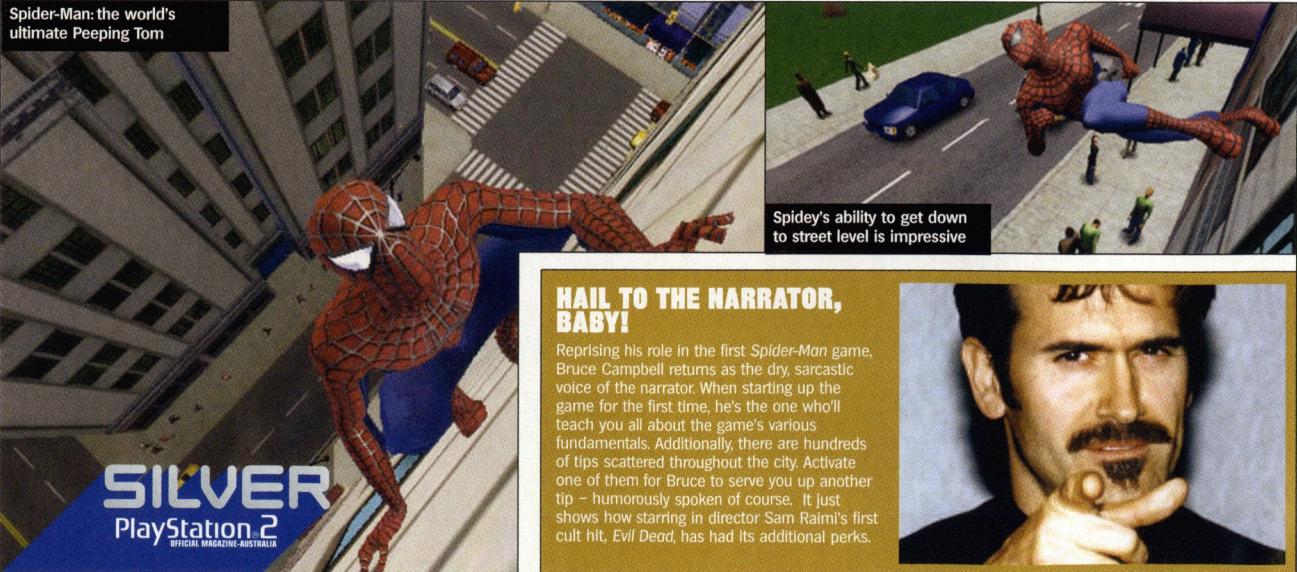
Maguire as the webbed crusader and Alfred Molina as the six-legged Doc Ock. Of course having a big game based solely on a film script would be far too limiting, so as well as Doc Ock, Spidey has to take on other familiar comic book foes such as Rhino, Shocker, and Mysterio. He even teams up at one point with raunchy seductress, Black Cat, the superheroine who looks like she's been shot in the back of the chest with a pair of torpedoes.

Doc Ock is still the main bad guy though, and the

"Play this for a few hours and you'll believe you've got a red lycra suit under your shirt"

game includes some crucial scenes that outline how he went from the brilliant Doctor Octavius, to the noticeably grumpy Doc Ock. There's also a fair few cut-scenes and game goals that deal with Spidey's private affairs, including his ongoing romantic saga with the love of his life, Mary Jane, his friend Harry, and working as a cameraman for *The Daily Bugle*.

Often you'll be begging J. Jonah Jameson for work, then have to rush to one of Mary Jane's stage



BETTER THAN

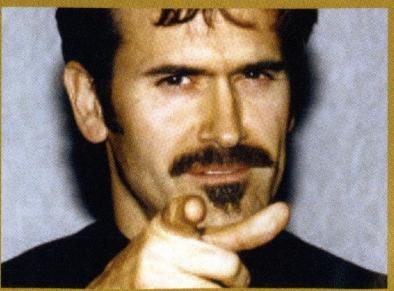
THE HULK
WORSE THAN
HAVING SUPER POWERS

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time
Free-roaming superheroism! Brilliant!
What they need to fix
More variety in the side-quests

HAIL TO THE NARRATOR, BABY!

Reprising his role in the first *Spider-Man* game, Bruce Campbell returns as the dry, sarcastic voice of the narrator. When starting up the game for the first time, he's the one who'll teach you all about the game's various fundamentals. Additionally, there are hundreds of tips scattered throughout the city. Activate one of them for Bruce to serve you up another tip – humorously spoken of course. It just shows how starring in director Sam Raimi's first cult hit, *Evil Dead*, has had its additional perks.



He can always get a job supplying the world with silly string

performances, beating up gangs of thugs on the streets below as you go. Like the film, the game actually pays attention to the life of Peter Parker, not just his alter ego's adventures.

How does the game's free-roaming combine with all these gameplay and story elements? With the inclusion of a massive New York City to explore, the game takes a few cues from GTA and THUG by dividing the game into chapters. At any given time they'll be objectives that need to be accomplished, like completing a *Daily Bugle* assignment, or taking on one of the game's main villains. You don't need to rush off and do these under any pressure, as each chapter requires you swing down to the ground below and stop numerous street thugs and bandits in order to earn a hero point quota. When you knock over the quota and the main objectives, the next chapter begins. At any point, you're either in combat with thugs or bosses, or you're swinging around the city to the next challenge.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

What makes *Spider-Man 2* a blast to play is how well the developers have implemented the ambitious idea of a living, sprawling metropolis. The city is a packed island (Manhattan) dotted with cloud-tickling buildings and heavy traffic below. While it seems a lot bigger than Vice City, it's the unlimited height that the game entertains that really boggles. Unlike Vice City's invisible ceiling, Spider-Man can ascend thousands of feet atop the Empire State building then take a massive swan dive to the street below, hurtling towards the ground like a kamikaze dive bomber while the cars and people sharpen into uninterrupted focus. It's virtual base jumping. Dotted around each of the skyscrapers are tokens you can collect, and it's surprisingly good fun to swing from tower to tower exploring for these trivial badges at such vertigo-inducing heights.

Speaking of which, one of the prime complaints from players of the last game was the web swinging. It seemed people had real beef with the way Spider-Man's web latched on to naked sky rather than actual buildings. Hearing the complaint, developer Treyarch have gone back and totally revamped how Spidey gets

around, making it a lot more realistic and doing a great job in the process. Now if you want to launch a web you've got to be close to a building for your webbing to stick (an easy task due to the density of the city). Once you latch on, you'll start swinging in the logical direction the laws of physics demand, often causing you to wrap around buildings instead of going straight ahead. There's a bunch of nifty tricks and moves you can do because of this versatility. For instance, it's possible to swing at an almost ninety-degree angle and sprint along building windows just like in the first film. This new system is more fluid than the old and mucking around with it is almost a game unto itself.

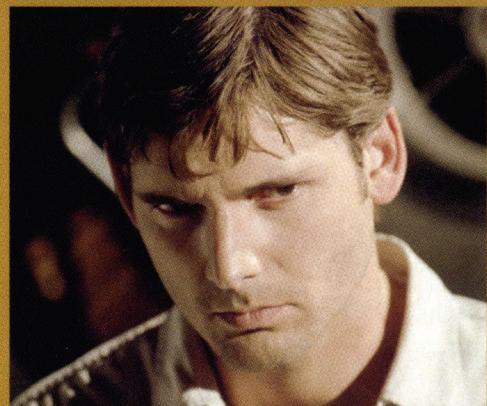
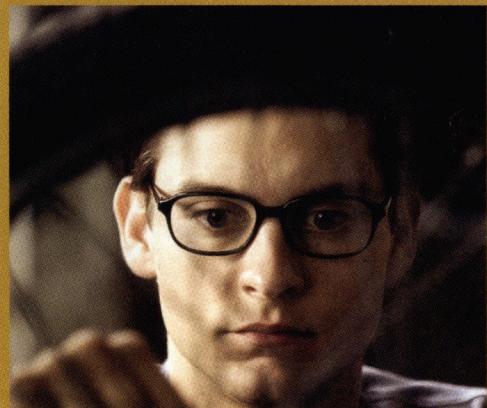
FRIENDLY AND IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Scarpering down to the streets below you'll spot hordes of taxis, cars, and people going about their business. What's immediately notable is how little you can interact with most of the people and vehicles. While you can jump onto cars and ride around on top of them, there's no car jacking or machine guns to attack passers-by with, and your punches and web attacks magically go straight through the innocent.

The only general interaction are the comments people hurl at you as you swing by like "get a real job," or "Lookin' good Spidey". But like GTA, things are not so rosy in this city. In fact, it's got a major case of moral bankruptcy. Every few blocks there's some crime being committed, or someone who needs saving. New York ex-Mayor, Giuliani, would be choking on his calzone if New York were really so crime infested. When a robbery or hold-up is being committed nearby, a purple marker will

CONTROLLING PARKER

At certain points throughout the game you'll have to lose the uniform and hobble around like boring Peter Parker. This most occurs when visiting the *Daily Bugle* office, as well as when you've got to meet up with Mary Jane and Harry. Unlike *The Hulk* game, whose Bruce Banner sections were painful, you'll rarely stay as Peter for long before changing back into the red tights and bolting off to protect the city.



Kirsten Dunst would make anyone feel up in the clouds

Swinging has improved and you must 'anchor' from points



come up on screen indicating precisely where it's going down so you can quickly lend your aid. Apart from immediate crimes, there are also lots of civilians waving you down to get your attention. Once you talk to these people, a side-quest is triggered that involves stopping a crime or helping someone in distress. You could, of course, ignore all these pleas and doodle off to play at the arcade, or you could swallow that "with great power comes great responsibility" malarky and swing off to save the day, earning some much needed hero points in the process.

The side-quests and street crimes fall into a handful of categories. There are the more docile events like retrieving children's helium balloons, saving people dangling from ledges, whisking injured people to hospital, and moving people from sinking boats to shore. Then there are the real crimes that include chasing down bag snatchers, preventing robberies, stopping car jackings and mad drivers, intervening in police shoot outs, and fending off ambushes by thugs.

While there does seem to be a reasonable variety of lesser crimes, after playing the game for a few hours you'll stop being surprised. Ideally the street crimes could've done with having three or four times as much variety. The enemies you're fighting are often pretty derivative as well – just street thugs. Only as you trundle towards completing the main missions do the enemies start to get varied. For instance, after you beat Shocker and Mysterio, their goons will pop up every so often on the street causing havoc. It's a welcome

MOVIE MOVES

Spidey can now perform a heap of new moves inspired from the first film's various action sequences. He can drop onto cars and smash at their roofs 'till the driver stops and tries to flee, like he did to his uncle's murderer's escape vehicle in the first *Spider-Man* film. Spidey can also grab hold of flagpoles and streetlights and observe the city below, purchase acrobatic tumbles that can be performed mid-air, and slingshot himself around the city when holding a web in each hand.



change, but it's not really enough. The game would've benefited from adding detail to the bog-standard thugs, perhaps breaking them into different gangs. This could've set up some interesting sub-quests in terms of gang warfare and other interesting felonies.

I'LL TEACH YOU TO MORTEIN ME!

Yet somehow, despite the lack of situational variety, *Spider-Man* is always fun. Apart from the massive city playground you hoon around in, the combat is rich with cheeky moves, interesting combos, and new elements. You can go toe-to-toe with enemies on the ground or launch them into the air and hit them with a hovering combo. Apart from his punches and kicks, Spidey's web attacks are as effective as ever, allowing you to temporarily wrap up enemies if you're outnumbered.

Your arsenal widens as you progress through the missions as well. After you've amassed a certain number of hero points you can swing into the shops around the city and purchase combat and ability upgrades. You'll start off increasing your web casting speed, but you'll later gain access to combos that allow you to web enemies onto street lights, smash them with a fifty-foot spinning pile driver, or punch them a couple of times before lassoing them above your head in a cowboy circle. That's what we're talkin' about! After collecting most of the moves, you'll find yourself pausing mid-combat to check your upgrade screen and try out new combos you've bought as it's tough to remember them all.

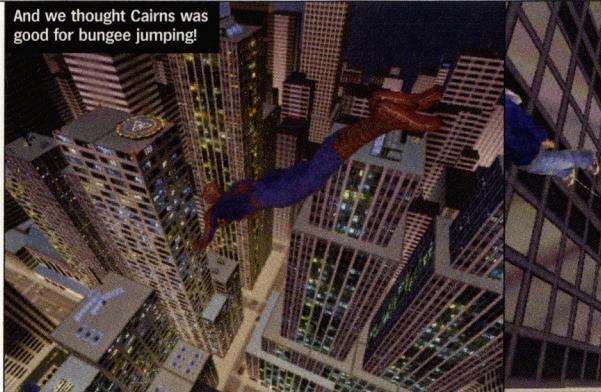
Spidey also flaunts his renowned spider reflexes and agility with his new dodge move. Every time he's about to be hit with an attack an aura flashes around his head. If you react fast enough and press the dodge button, Spidey will nip out of the way of incoming punches, slams, and even bullets. What's more, if you dodge correctly, you'll be able to perform a counter attack move. This combat element is exacerbated with the new spider reflex meter. Here Spidey gives Neo and Max Payne the big finger as the game world slows down, allowing the web

swing to use his dodge and counter-attack ability with far greater dexterity. While the meter runs down quickly, you can replenish it by performing more real-time dodge moves and high-flying spider acrobatics – both of which are sterling fun anyway.

While you can get away with rarely using your spider reflexes against lesser thugs, you'd be silly not to use it during boss encounters. Rhino is the first guy you take on immediately, and with your spider reflex meter, is a piece of home-made pie. Doc Ock, however, can be a right bastard if he gets his tentacles on you, and it's here that savvy use of reflexes will win the day, the girl, and the right to go home and make some sweet, sweet love.

Most of the boss fights are fairly enjoyable affairs with the exception of Mysterio's attack on the Statue of Liberty. While the rest of the game is enjoyable, this objective will

"After you've amassed a certain number of hero points you can purchase combat and ability upgrades..."



Being a famous swinger is a risky business...



NEY YORK, NOO YAWK

The city landscapes have always been one of the *Spider-Man* series' best greatest strengths and since the original games on the PSOne, New York has only continued to look better and better. Spidey is now able to get down to the ground – so he is not confined to rooftops like he has been in previous versions of the game. But... that's just the start of it! There are many new additions and detail in the city – but sightseers and anyone whose had the pleasure of visiting "the city that never sleeps" will instantly recognise particular landmarks dotted around Manhattan. As you can see, the Statue of Liberty has been digitised for prosperity and the fine details are certainly impressive.



no doubt leave a series of smashed PS2s and control pads in its wake. It's so fiddly to deal with it's as if a real-life super villain slipped into the Treyarch offices and added this part into the game to send all players insane, perhaps hoping they'd start rioting in their neighbourhoods with garden hoes and flame-lit insect repellent. "Anarchy," they'd cry, "anarchy!" It really is a turd on a white rug. Prepare yourself then get it out of the way quickly.

SPIDER-MAN FOREVER

Spider-Man 2 is not a hard game, though. Every time you complete a task or solve a crime your health is restored, and if you die, you're conveniently placed back at the start of the objective. This is in contrast to the merciless GTA that stripped you of your weapons, vehicle, and position on the map if you failed a mission. Such provisions allow *Spider-Man 2* to always be chilled-out fun, but it also means you'll knock over the main missions in less than eight hours – and it's so enjoyable you will find yourself playing it in hour blocks. Naturally there's a whole heap of other trivial things you can do after the game is finished. In fact, according to the stat screen, completing the main missions only accounts for about 48 per cent of the

game. But these extra bits aren't quite as interesting as the GTA games; for instance you can't buy property and stumble into a new episode of adventure. You can deliver pizzas across the city, undertake the game's many race challenges, unlock a fight arena, play some games at the arcade, and solve street crimes, but there are no more major surprises.

In fact, after you knock over the main missions your next objective is to amass 50,000 hero points!

Considering that each street crime may only net you a few hundred points, you can understand the size of the task. It's a helluva lot better than scrolling credits followed by a "would you like to try the harder difficulty level" message though, and the combat and realistic web swinging certainly make the game enjoyable enough for you to continue gliding around – even if it does feel like the game was ripe for some sort of regular add-on mission pack.

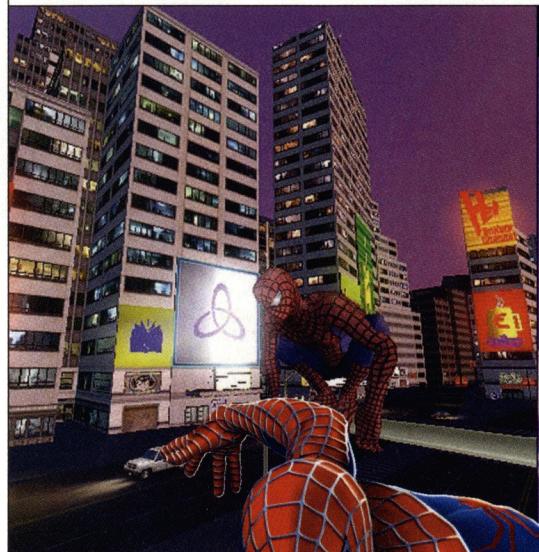
As games go, *Spider-Man 2* is a winner. It's big, bold, and fun. It might not be the most epic and varied game next to the GTA series, but it possesses superior combat and visual flare. Nothing else puts you in the web swinger's shoes like this does, and with its size, generous move list, and A-grade production, it raises the bar for future action games to come. **James Ellis**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	09	Free falling from skyscrapers is a glorious spectacle
Sound	09	The film's actors feature, and the music is great
Gameplay	08	Puts you in Spidey's tights! Fight, explore, and enjoy
Lifespan	08	Plenty to do after the main quest, but will you bother?

The best superhero game ever!
Lovers of action-adventure or *Spider-Man* need this now.

09



Funnily enough, there are bigger freaks than Spidey in New York!





X ADVENTURE

HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN

All aboard the Hogwarts Express! Toot-toot!

X DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: EA
DEVELOPER: EA GAMES
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: HARRYPOTTEREA.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
ONLINE: NO

X BACK STORY

The phenomenon started with single mum J.K. Rowling scribbling notes on napkins in a cafe. The resultant book, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, was instantly popular, but it wasn't until the third (and, in our opinion, best) book, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, that the craze really took off.

It's very hard to ignore the hullabaloo that surrounds Harry Potter. He's everywhere you look – the TV, magazines, newspapers, posters, stores, hundreds of children in costume, and, of course, gaming. And with the release of the third movie, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, we're getting a brand new PS2 adventure for the Potter-philes out there who simply can't get enough of the unlikely, bespectacled hero.

The adventure begins with the gang returning to Hogwarts for a brand new school year. There's talk of Sirius Black, but no mention of who this character is, or why everyone's so afraid of him. This makes the backstory feel a little truncated, but the unspoken assumption that everyone knows who he is isn't necessarily erroneous – if you don't know who Sirius Black is, why the hell are you even playing the game?

Newcomer Professor Lupin gets a bit more if an intro – Hermione tells everyone who he is on while they're on the train. Yes, it's not quite how it happened in the book, so don't come here expecting 100% authenticity. The game, for the most part, is more or less true to the film, but certain peripheral details from the book get lost or changed – as they do in the movie.

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban offers quite a few improvements on the previous titles in the series. For

starters, you can now, for the first time, play as all three characters – Harry, Ron and Hermione. The basic controls for each are the same, and there is a shared pool of spells, so for basic running around there's no real difference. However, each of the three characters has a special ability for getting through tight spots. Hermione can squeeze herself into small spaces; Ron has a sort of special Weasley brand of ESP that allows him to locate hidden doors; and Harry has the hugely helpful ability to jump across ledges. Naturally, there are more ledges than secret doors or tunnels, so you'll spend most of your time as Harry by default, but you can switch between the characters at will.

The game is fairly linear in construction. You have set tasks to complete, one after another – you're free to roam in between, but your companions will urge you on until you get to where you're meant to be with little, repeated "reminders" that you're supposed to be doing something. These soundbites can get really irritating and the only real way to stop them is to just go ahead and do the task. When you complete your set tasks for the day, you'll be free to explore Hogwarts at your leisure, so don't worry too much about jumping straight from one task to the next – you'll be free to come back to anything you passed by later on.

BEANS, BEANS ARE GOOD FOR YOUR HEART...



Remember collecting Bertie Bott's Every Flavour Beans? What about the wizard cards from the chocolate frogs? Well, they're back. The beans act as a form of currency, allowing you to purchase necessary items from the Weasley twins. They're scattered all over Hogwarts and are highly visible, so they shouldn't be too hard to collect. The cards, however, are tucked away in hidden corners and treasure chests, so you have to explore every room thoroughly. These expand your health points every time you collect a set, so you probably won't want to miss any. Here's a tip: watch Ron carefully. If he stands next to a wall, it contains a secret door.

BETTER THAN

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

WORSE THAN

RATCHET & CLANK II: LOCKED & LOADED

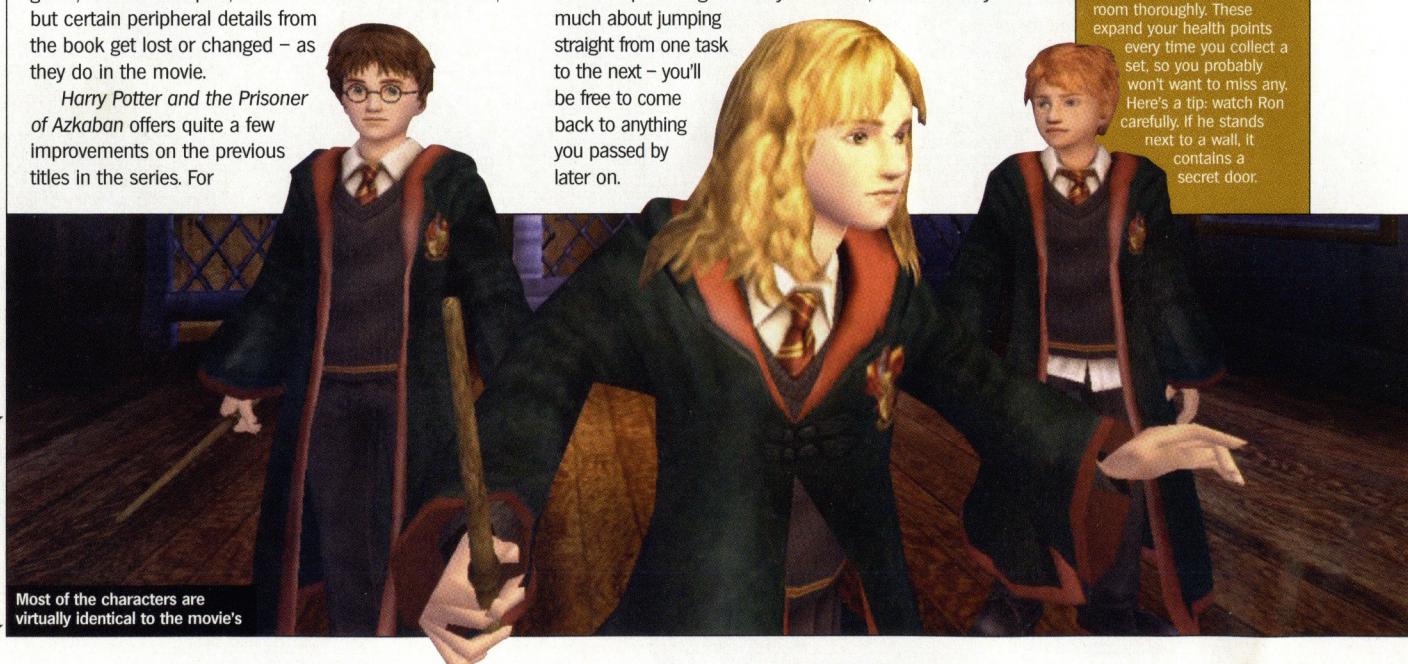
LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

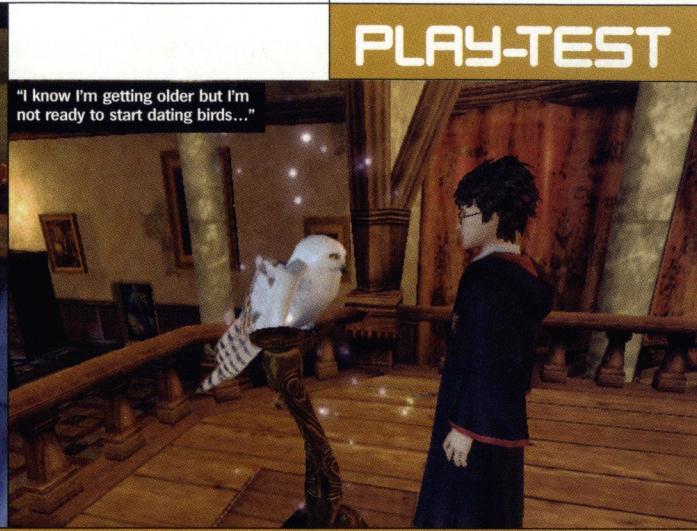
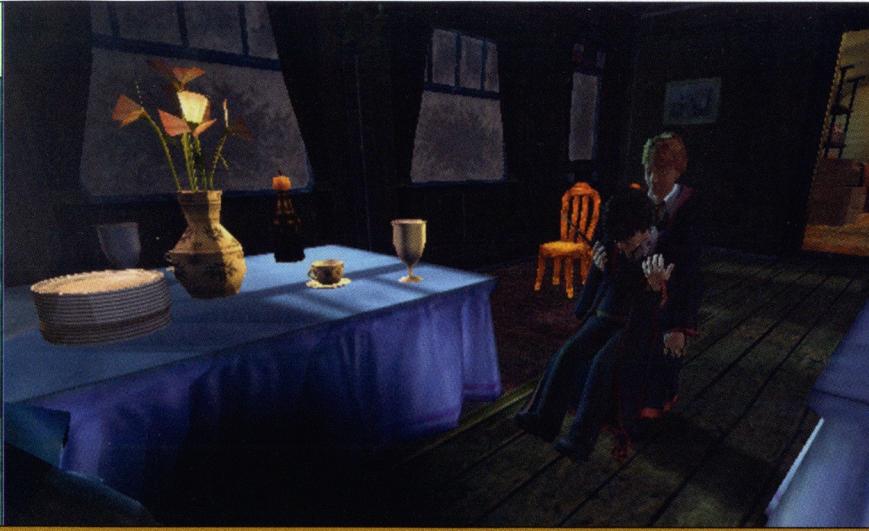
The EyeToy mini-games

What they need to fix

A multiplayer option would've been absolutely magic



Most of the characters are virtually identical to the movie's



Hogwarts is, in essence, a convoluted, labyrinthine building. At least, it appears to be. However, it is quite easy to get from one point to another, making the action just that tiny bit more linear. It would have been nice, perhaps, if the building had been a bit more confusing to explore – adding a nice element to the gameplay. The core of the game may be the puzzle solving, but the fighting is half-heartedly inserted at best. You must lock onto your enemies, since the movement of spells across the room is extremely erratic – and move around to dodge while you fire off your spells. Later in the game the enemies are a little tougher, but all in all, it's not very taxing to the seasoned gamer.

The puzzles are definitely where it's at. They're not complicated, but you will have to switch between the characters to make use of their abilities. And some spells are pooled – the ever-present Flipendo, for example – but Ron can cast Lumos (which fans will remember as the light-making spell), Hermione can cast Glacius, to freeze enemies and to help in solving some puzzles, and Harry can cast the powerful Expecto Patronum for defeating Dementors. Also, although the puzzles are fairly easy, you will have to think about who to use all the time, and what you have to do. There will be a little to-ing and fro-ing as you explore areas and move things around, which helps the game lose some of that unfortunate straight-line quality. Also, the problems aren't time-based, so you can spend as much time as you like trying to figure things out, in spite of your companions urging you to hurry.

The coolest feature of the game is its range of mini-games. Some of these are nothing spectacular – racing owls, flying about on the Hippogriff Buckbeak, wizard duelling with other students. But the others are EyeToy compatible. These will see you waving your arms like a lunatic i-Ninja as you swat or clap at moving objects. Another of the games will have you involved in trying to catch the Golden Snitch, Quidditch style, while you avoid the Bludgers. Or you'll have to match up exploding cards, trying to avoid the whole thing blowing up in your face. For mini-games, they're surprisingly entertaining, and you'll probably find yourself spending as much time on them as the main game.

Hogwarts is beautifully crafted, and the characters bear a strong resemblance to their movie counterparts. The grown-up characters – Snape and Dumbledore, for example – are a little less like the movie characters, but still recognisable enough. The camera, can be a little hard to control, particularly if you are moving around in confined spaces. On the ground this is frustrating, but when you're airborne it can get very annoying indeed. Coupled with controls

Harry puts his magic to good use to make a matching dining table



"Hogwarts is, in essence, a convoluted, labyrinthine building. At least, it appears to be"

that are definitely on the slow side, this can make for an irritation that's enough to distract you from the game environment on occasions.

There's nothing particularly innovative or new about *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, but it makes good use of the source material, and there's some fun shenanigans to be had, while fans will enjoy revisiting the story. You won't find it taxing, but it's a great way to while away a quiet afternoon. ▶ **Michelle Starr**

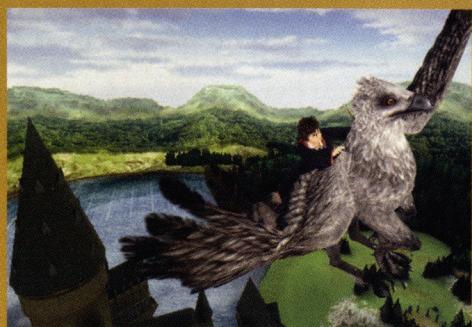
OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	08	A visual feast
Sound	07	Nice music, and the voice acting is solid
Gameplay	06	Smooth, good pace, lots of ways to score
Lifespan	06	You'll probably only play it once through

Stock standard elements and easy gameplay, but still one of the better examples of this kind of game.

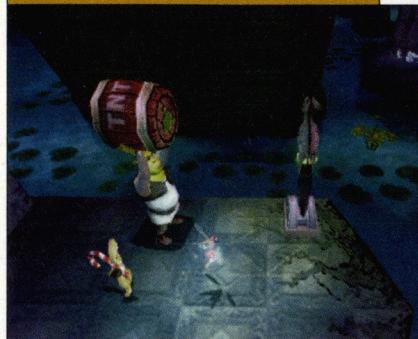
07

HARRY GETS HAPPENIN'



The game has, of necessity, taken quite a few liberties with the original story in order to make certain areas more playable. For the devoted fan, though, there is plenty to recognise.

The relationship to the movie is, of course, paramount, since the two media are very similar, but it's the little touches that make Hogwarts come alive. The Monster Books of Monsters that have to be defeated with Flipendo spells, the moving pictures, the students who populate the hallways, the lush furnishings and the back-and-forth banter between the three main characters make *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* a fully three-dimensional gaming experience.



Not even the movie was this much fun

ROLE-PLAYING GAME

SHREK 2

"Mum, Dad this is my husband, Shrek! Erm... Mum... Dad?"

DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER: LUXOFUX
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.SHREK2THEGAME.COM
60HZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: YES
SURROUND SOUND: YES
ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

Shrek was a cool movie. It had great voice acting by Mike Myers and a script that cleverly mixed the kiddle with the current. The sequel has also just appeared in cinemas and with typical commercial timeliness Activision has now brought us the game.

M

eeting your girlfriend's parents for the first time is a scary experience... Imagine then, the sheer horror it must be if you're a big, green, stinky ogre who eats eyeballs and tends to be flatulent at inappropriate times.

This is the dilemma facing Shrek and his now-bride Fiona, as he returns for the movie tie-in, Shrek 2.

It's a law written in stone that movie tie-ins are rather crap. And if not, they usually have very little to do with the movie. It comes as a pleasant surprise then that Shrek 2 is actually alright. Not earth-shattering, but fun.

The gameplay is the most intriguing aspect of the package, as it seems to be an almost toned-down version of an RPG. You control a team of four players, usually comprised of Shrek, Donkey, Gingerbread man and Fiona but which rotates to include Lil' Red, Puss in Boots, the Big Bad Wolf and others.

The game's levels comprise a bunch of mini-quests (like collecting eyeballs, helping a goat across a bridge, herding chickens, etc.). These mini-quests will usually force you to use the various characters' special skills. For instance Gingerbread man can jump very high, Shrek is super-strong and Donkey can fart with extreme power. Which, believe it or not, comes in handy quite often.

As you can probably surmise this is not Baldur's Gate, but it's good to see an added layer of depth on top of the usual simple platform antics that come with a license like this.

The graphics are quite strong, with vibrant colours and slick looking animations. However, sometimes you feel as though the camera is at odds with the gameplay as it always seems too close, too far away or just plain poorly placed. This is a minor niggle, as the tasks are never really very hard and the check points are plentiful.

Possibly the biggest letdown with Shrek 2 is that the voice actors from the movie weren't brought in for the game. Admittedly the guys who do Shrek and Donkey are passable, but their comments grate after a while, especially since their timing is so often off. Shrek will often use his one-liner of "SHREK SMASH!" minutes after he has smashed and is off somewhere else fanning a chicken at something.

Shrek 2 is a game mainly for younger teens and kids. Those of us who enjoyed the more adult nods and pop culture references in the movie will be left out. This is a pity because Shrek was one of those great films that appealed to all ages. Jokes about breaking wind can be funny once or twice.

Shrek 2 is nicely put together but is unfortunately a little too easy and short. It looks nice, sounds okay and plays with more variety than you'd expect. Ultimately though, it's not that special. **Anthony O'Connor**

He's not exactly a troll, but shouldn't he be under the bridge?



A TIME FOR HEROES



The only moments of the game where you'll play as an individual are in the 'Hero Time' sections. These will take one character and make them run through various places. This is quite cool as it gives characters a chance to show their special skills. Once completed however, it's back to the team.



OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	Nice colourful models with dodgy camera
Sound	05	Okay voice acting but ordinary script
Gameplay	07	RPG for the younger gamer
Life span	05	Very short and easy, even for youngsters

It's won't change your life, but Shrek 2 will make the day of game-savvy eleven-year-old boys who like to giggle.

07



BETTER THAN

CRASH BANDICOOT

WORSE THAN

JAK II

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

A cool four-player RPG style with a nice variety of characters

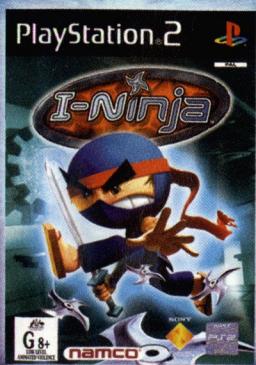
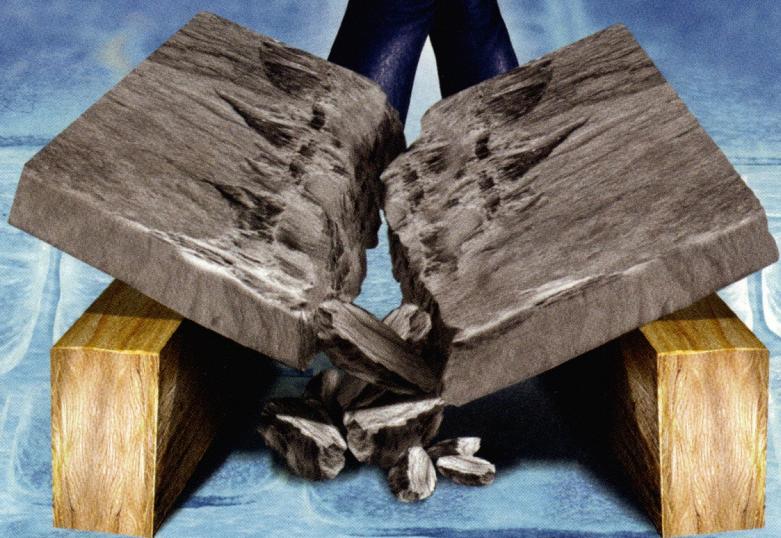
What they need to fix

The camera, the dodgy script and the lack of depth



**RULE NO: 88
NEVER SHOW
EMOTION**

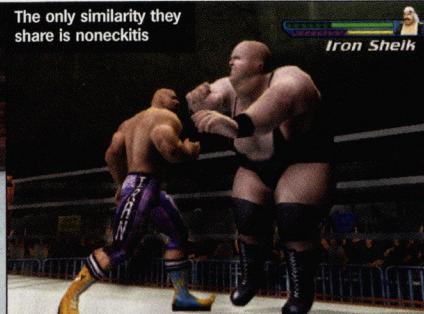
CENSORED



**Don't just break the rules of Ninja.
Whack'em, slap'em and lay'em out cold.**

namco www.i-ninja-game.com

**fun,
anyone?**
PlayStation.2



WRESTLING SIM

SHOWDOWN: LEGENDS OF WRESTLING

The old boys of the ring dust off their leotards for another rumble

DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER: ACCLAIM AUSTIN
PRICE: \$69.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.LEGENDSSHOWDOWN.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES
ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

Showdown is the third Legends of Wrestling game released by Acclaim. The series so far has relied heavily on nostalgia, rather than solid gameplay and replay value.

B

ack in the heyday of pro-wrestling, no one admitted that the matches were scripted or choreographed. Naïve interviewers who dared quiz wrestlers as to whether their sport was 'real' were often met with a punch in the mouth, and asked 'how real did that feel?' Then, more than ever, wrestlers were giant men and monsters, held in awe and reverence by the viewing public. In an attempt to recreate the titanic clashes of the immortal greats of the past, Acclaim is rolling the same formula down the ramp and into the ring once more.

Looks-wise, the wrestlers are wonderfully realised; lovingly recreated with spectacular attention to detail. Aside from the authentic costumes and attire, the highlight would have to be the hair of the wrestlers bestowed with '80s-style mullets or otherwise luscious 'dos. The follically blessed have hair that flows around their shoulders and leaps about their head as you punch them in the face like a ripe melon. Even the Hulkster's meagre tresses loll about his bald patch as he plods around the ring. Tassled outfits, like the one sported by the Ultimate Warrior behave in a similar manner.

Ring ropes also part and sway with the elasticity and tension that they should. With enough prolonged physical abuse, you can bust your opponent open and make them bleed but unless you look closely, you can hardly tell. The victim's face only gets flecked with crimson, unlike the extensive bleeding you get with head wounds. While authentically modelled, the arenas where the legends battle it out in are pretty dull on the whole. While the first few rows of the crowd are constructed in 3D, they don't inject any energy into the matches. Entrance sequences fall a bit flat too, with accurate tunes, but bland movies and no pyrotechnics. Boo.

MACHO, MACHO MAN...

The quality of the animations are similarly haphazard.

BETTER THAN

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2

WORSE THAN

SMACKDOWN! HCTP

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

They've definitely done their homework on the old skool rosters

What they need to fix

The simple controls, lacklustre career mode and no four-player support

Some of the simpler motions like taunts, mannerisms and even basic stomps look incredibly natural, yet more complex moves could have used a bit more work. Power moves like suplexes and chokeslams don't seem to have much sting in them – you just won't be wincing on the couch when you see them pulled off. To Acclaim's credit though, there's no sign of any collision detection problems, so you won't see any hands passing through chests in grapples or similar mysterious occurrences.

The game has a real 'rock 'n' roll wrestling' feel, but aside from the pumping track that accompanies the title screen cinematic, there's nothing else particularly outstanding. The commentary is provided by the classic WCW commentary team of Tony Schiavone, Larry Zbyszko and Bobby "The Brain" Heenan, which provides a real sense of familiarity, even if it does feel a bit broken at times.

The roster for S:LOW is one of its most impressive feats. A staggering 73 legends are available to play. Even the most avid wrestling fan would do well to think of a true legend that isn't included in the conclusive line-up. The Create-A-Wrestler mode that you can use to buffer the roster even more is sadly a bit lacking in quality content though, and isn't as extensive as that offered by the competition.

There's a reasonable variety of match types to choose from, with gimmick matches like steel cage,

WHOLE LOTTA HART

By far the worst feature of the game is the tutorial mode. The big draw card here is that the commentary accompanying the breakdown of the controls is provided by the 'Excellence of Execution' himself, Bret 'The Hitman' Hart. Sadly, it's only a bit of a novelty, and the thrill quickly wears off. Maybe a short documentary about The Hitman's career might have been more compelling, with some juicy snippets about the infamous Montreal Screwjob and his run-ins with Goldberg.





"Trust me. I've done this before. Honest."

hardcore, tables and ladders included alongside more traditional events like one-on-ones, three-way dances and tag matches featuring up to eight men.

Why anyone would bother sitting through a 60-minute Ironman match is beyond the comprehension of most mortals, so inclusions like that in a more casual game are a bit of a mystery. While some consideration has gone into the multiplayer game, if you're going solo it's a bit threadbare. The single-player game offers an era-based

"The roster is one of its most impressive feats. A staggering 73 legends are available to play"

selection of battles which suffers from storylines you could throw a tissue over, and a collection of recreated classic matches that don't convey the entire experience or emotion of the initial feuds.

GETTING TO GRAPPLE

The controls have been reworked for the third *LOW*, with mixed results. At a basic level, the controls aren't that different to any other grappler, but they have been simplified – and more than necessary. This does mean that it's easier for a novice gamer to pick up and learn the game, but at the same time, it's decimated the arsenal of techniques available to each wrestler. This set-up is all well and good for a quick bash, but for anyone

looking to really put the game through its paces, it may get a little boring before long. Even more bizarrely, pulling off a simple move like an Irish Whip accurately can be a nightmare unless heavily practiced. For the absolute beginner, the game gives players control prompts at the sides of the screen for their immediate options in terms of attack, defence or movement. It's a useful training tool, but you'll soon turn it off as it gets annoying after a while, continually taking up the edge of the screen.

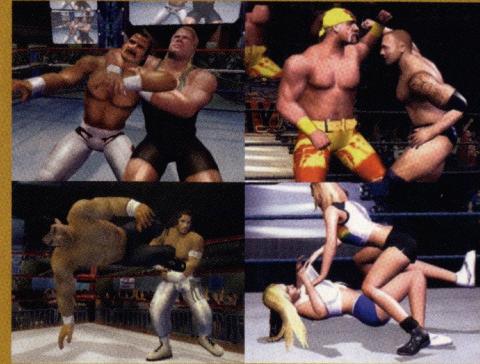
You may not notice it at first glance, but *S:LOW* is a very ironic acronym for this game. By and large, the roster is filled with old-school main eventers, which is fair enough, really. This means, though, that the game lumbers on with the shambling pace that you expect from the big bruisers. You don't get much of the high risk, high-flying cruiserweight style of wrestling that has risen to western popularity of late. We're talking clotheslines, arm drags, scoop slams and suplexes here – nothing overly flashy, just the fundamentals.

As if the slow tedium of match proceedings wasn't enough, the extended loading times that you're forced to endure between levels are enough to send you to the kitchen to boil the kettle. There's not even much of an attempt to disguise the drawn-out waits with anything entertaining or informative, as is done so successfully in so many other games.

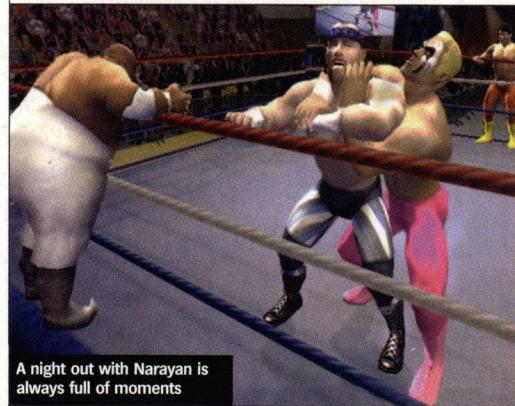
Long-term appeal is tarnished as the game controls are too simple. All told, *S:LOW* is only as appealing as being sandwiched between Abdullah the Butcher's man-boobs, and will most likely put you to sleep faster than Ted DiBiase's Million Dollar Dream. This is territory for hardcore wrestling fans only. ▶ Nick O'Shea

THE LOWDOWN ON THE SHOWDOWN

While it does take a different approach to the wrestling genre, *Showdown Legends of Wrestling* main competition comes from the licensed WWE powerhouse, *WWE Smackdown! Here Comes The Pain*. While there are a few of the opinion that the WWE series doesn't shine as brightly as it did in its halcyon days, you'll find that *Here Comes The Pain* is a stellar title with immense replay value and goes for the same price as *Showdown Legends of Wrestling*.



SHOWDOWN: LOW	WWE SMACKDOWN: HCTP
MATCH TYPES	11
ROSTER	73
PLAYERS	1-2
CREATE-A-WRESTLER	Average
CAREER MODE	Weak era-based matches and classic event recreations
	Incredible
	Extensive storylines, customisable stables and RPG elements



A night out with Narayan is always full of moments

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	Lifelike characters with dull, dreary surrounds
Sound	05	'80s rock sets the tone, but does wear thin
Gameplay	05	Overly simple, yet problematic controls
Lifespan	04	Only if you actually remember these wrestlers!

Count the 1-2-3 and ring the bell.
Legends of Wrestling gets counted out of title contention again.

05

Scott Steiner, purveyor of fine medieval headwear

Nicholai Volkov never quite mastered the Perestroika Press

Remember King Kong Bundy?
...don't mess with his McOz!

COMBAT ELITE: WWII PARATROOPERS



"If I hear one more German say 'Ice to see you'..."



The special effects add a lot to the all-round experience

X ACTION

COMBAT ELITE: WWII PARATROOPERS

We went searching for some camouflage pants but we couldn't find any...

X DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER: BATTLEBORNE ENTERTAINMENT
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: JULY
WEBSITE: WWW.COMBATELITEGAME.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
ONLINE: NO

X BACK STORY

Established in 2002, BattleBorne Entertainment is a fledgling development studio from Nevada. While Combat Elite is their first project, BattleBorne team members have previously worked on games like *Fallout 2* and *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance*.

Dropping in behind enemy lines, in the dark, under fire and aiming for a drop zone you've only seen on a blackboard in your barracks takes courage, strength and coconut-sized... well, you get the picture.

Combat Elite lets you fill the boots of a few of these warriors and pits you against the Nazi war machine. Players can choose between a member of the United States 82nd Airborne and 101st Airborne, or the British 1st Airborne.

Developed using the engine that powers titles like *Baldur's Gate* and *Champions of Norrath*, *Combat Elite* is a third-person shooter with an isometric-style view. With the overhead perspective, you're able to see more action than you'd usually be able to see in a traditional FPS, however it switches to a first-person view for weapons like the sniper rifles and turrets. This change makes it much easier to target and get the most out of the weapon, but it also serves to highlight the limitations of an overhead perspective in a game of this type.

There are over 40 authentic WWII weapons available, including staples like the Thompson SMG and the BAR (that's Browning Automatic Rifle for those who've always wanted to know). There are also rhyming British weapons the Sten gun and the Bren gun, and a German arsenal that ranges from the Luger to the feared MG-42.

Combat Elite has blended the action with RPG-style skill points and attributes. A player's skill with weapons and various other abilities will improve as the game unfolds. You're able to adjust your abilities during the course of the game, which will earn you promotions.

The graphics aren't breathtaking but they're loaded with detail, and plenty of attention has gone into creating



BETTER THAN

UNDERWORLD
WORSE THAN
COMMANDOS 2

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

Historically accurate weapons cache and instantly recognisable campaigns

What they need to fix

It's hard to imagine being down in the grit when you're floating high above

war-torn environments. The problem is, everything's so far away you can't really appreciate it.

Targeting is simple – holding L1 will enable a reticule that will snap to targets as they come into sight. You can also duck behind cover with a quick press of L3, something you'll need to be doing often because the enemy has range on their side. Some of the indoor levels are problematic, with walls preventing you from seeing who's about to jam a bayonet into your throat. You can rotate the camera but you'll probably receive a rifle butt or two to the head before you manage it.

Two-player co-op mode will save it from obscurity. That said, the action is thick and fast and should please arcade actioneers. □ Luke Reilly

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	08	Crisp and deliberately drab environs with effects
Sound	06	Average sound that doesn't hold a candle to MOH
Gameplay	07	Fine, but the firefights don't suit the game perspective
Life span	07	45 or so missions and two-player mode flesh it out

A blend of RPG-style camera views and traditional shooter action, *Combat Elite* is entertaining but inconsistent.

06

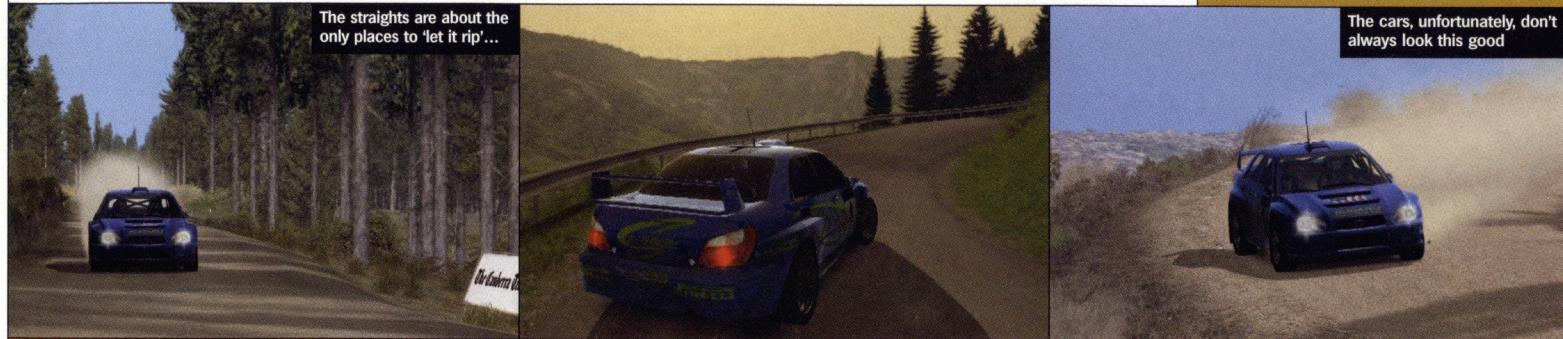
A BRIDGE TOO FAR



Combat Elite: WWII Paratroopers begins in Normandy, France, the night before D-Day. You'll also be participating in Operation Market Garden in Arnhem, the winter defense of Bastogne and piercing right into the heart of Nazi Germany to prevent them from completing an atomic bomb that could change the course of the war. Arnhem is the most interesting, as you're fighting a battle you know the allies will eventually lose. Thinking you can change the outcome is like watching *Titanic* and hoping they'll miss the iceberg. Please note: OPS2 doesn't condone watching *Titanic*; if pain persists, see your doctor.



The high views do allow for more tactical elements however



X RACING

RICHARD BURNS RALLY

Get as dirty as a bulging nappy

X DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI
DEVELOPER: WARTHOG
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-4 (ALTERNATING)
OUT: JULY
WEBSITE: WWW.RICHARDBURNSRALLY.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES
ONLINE: NO

X BACK STORY

Publisher SCI have had a good year so far, reporting major profits from *Conflict: Desert Storm II* and *The Italian Job*. Apart from planning to release a new *Conflict* game every year 'til 2006, they're also working on a *Reservoir Dogs* game.

A new rally game is released every three months. At least, that's what it averages out to if you consider there are at least 16 rally games out (or in development) for the PS2, and that the machine was released at the end of 2000. They're the ensuing plague of videogamedom. What the first-person view is to shooters, the dirt-flinging rally is to racing games. Perhaps it's because racing developers don't want to line up on the starting grid with the grunting *Gran Turismo 4*? But last time we checked, real-life rally racing coverage is only mainly seen on cable TV at ungodly hours in the morning or – even worse – Saturdays at lunchtime. What gives? What's with all the frickin' rally games?

Barred up in some sleet-stained marketing office in the UK, the SCI lads have obviously sat around and tried to come up with a new angle for their latest rally game, *Richard Burns Rally*, to separate it from the generic. The result: rally driving for dummies. That's pretty much what *RBR* is. A racing game all about the strains and stresses of realistic driving, the tired pull towards perfection, all made possible thanks to a handful of in-game lessons voiced by rally driver Richard Burns.

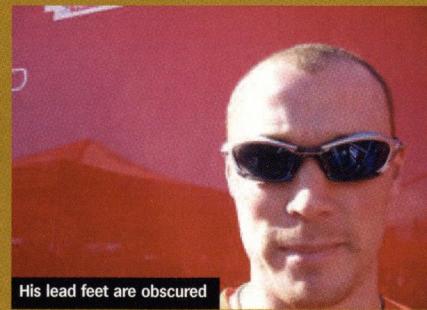
By becoming a digital rally squire you'll learn all about suspension, oversteering, left-foot braking, and some other chunks and pieces that will make you a tobacco-chewing rally-driving man by lesson's end. After you fly through the driving school in 30 minutes, the handbrake gives and the game starts to roll towards the bland. You'll be selecting pulse-pounding options like Quick Rally, or Rally Season, and drive down familiar-looking tracks in familiar-looking cars, unlocking tracks you don't care about and cars you've seen before. Despite the inclusion of a Richard Burns Challenge Mode, where you compete against Richard's times, it's still *deja vu* in mud.

The irony of the game is that, despite providing lessons for those who are crap at rally gaming, the actual game is bloody hard. You'll find yourself slowing down into low gears to just finish races, while wondering why you're enduring such sadomasochism. The tracks are narrow, the steering as overly sensitive as a woman's bum in a disco, and the tweaking lacks any simple presets.

Who is this game for? It ain't for casual fans of rally driving. No sir – they're off merrily splashing around in *WRC* or *Colin McRae Rally*. As for the hardcore rally driving fans, they're probably off merrily splashing about in *WRC* and *McRae* as well. It seems *RBR* is for the newbie who's experienced a videogame epiphany and wants to become a rally driving monk. As though

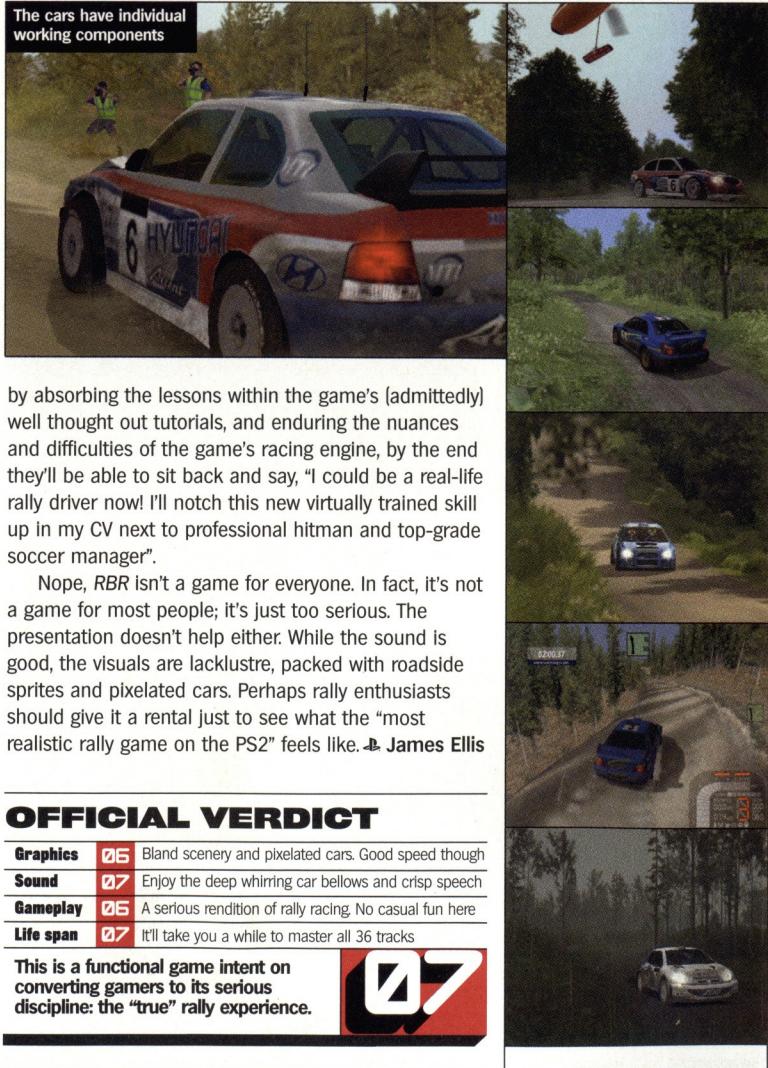
WHY DICK BURNS?

It's hardly surprising few would have heard of Richard Burns given rally driving is about as mainstream as deliberate regurgitation in Australia. It turns out he's the UK's number one rally driver and won the 2001 World Rally Championship. It seems old burning-rubber Dick was destined for off-road greatness though, as he's been hooning around in automobiles since he was eight. After rising up through the ranks into the professional arena, he's driven for big-name manufacturers such as Mitsubishi and Subaru. He currently races for Peugeot but has fallen ill in recent times.



His lead feet are obscured

The cars have individual working components



by absorbing the lessons within the game's (admittedly) well thought out tutorials, and enduring the nuances and difficulties of the game's racing engine, by the end they'll be able to sit back and say, "I could be a real-life rally driver now! I'll notch this new virtually trained skill up in my CV next to professional hitman and top-grade soccer manager".

Nope, *RBR* isn't a game for everyone. In fact, it's not a game for most people; it's just too serious. The presentation doesn't help either. While the sound is good, the visuals are lacklustre, packed with roadside sprites and pixelated cars. Perhaps rally enthusiasts should give it a rental just to see what the "most realistic rally game on the PS2" feels like. **James Ellis**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	06	Bland scenery and pixelated cars. Good speed though
Sound	07	Enjoy the deep whirring car bellows and crisp speech
Gameplay	06	A serious rendition of rally racing. No casual fun here
Life span	07	It'll take you a while to master all 36 tracks

This is a functional game intent on converting gamers to its serious discipline: the "true" rally experience.



BETTER THAN

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY

WORSE THAN

COLIN MCRAE 04

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

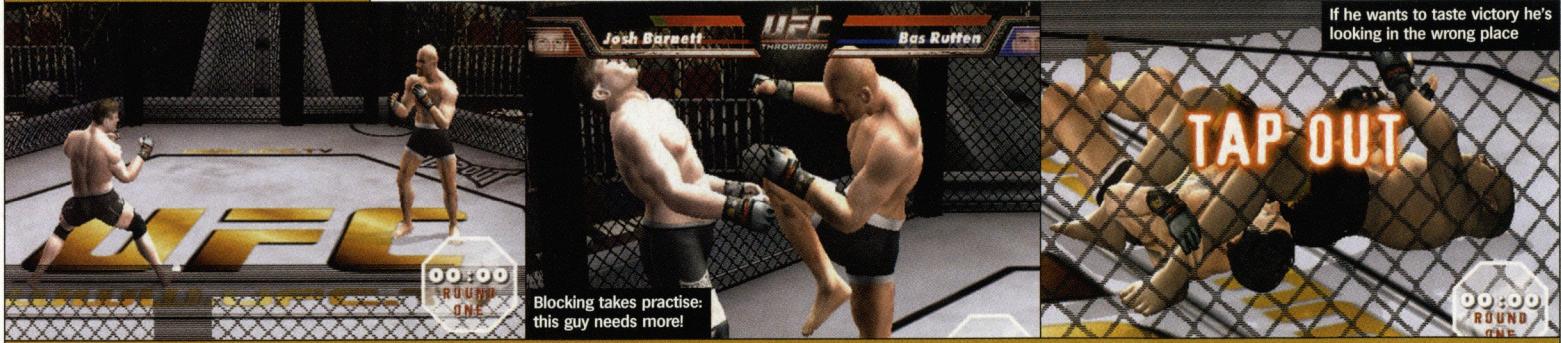
The sense of speed will leave your pants damp

What they need to fix

"Gimme prettier graphics. Gimme scenic track design"

PLAY-TEST

UFC SUDDEN IMPACT



X FIGHTING

UFC SUDDEN IMPACT

Step into the Octagon and get carried out on a stretcher

X DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: TAKE 2
DEVELOPER: OPUS
PRICE: \$49.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.GLOBALSTAR SOFTWARE.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES
ONLINE: NO

X BACK STORY

It's always been a talking point between fighting aficionados - which is the ultimate martial art? Ultimate Fighting Championship is a US-based mixed martial arts competition that seeks to answer that question. UFC Sudden Impact is the latest in a long line of games based around the 'sport'.

The best way to explain how *Sudden Impact* plays, is by thinking of it as a cross between a ramped-down *Tekken* and a wrestling game. Each of the four main buttons is associated with a limb, giving you two punches and two kicks, with combos of buttons yielding defensive manoeuvres and takedown techniques. Your movement is relative to the fixed camera's position, which works well, but to block strikes you have to push the analogue stick in the opposite direction to the way your fighter is facing, which can be a bit hard to get used to. With the stamina and submission systems used in *Sudden Impact*, a slight error can end a fight in an instant, so it can be a bit of a hard slog until you become familiar with using counters and reversals.

The animation is as hit-and-miss as Tank Abbott after going 10 rounds. A lot of the strikes, grapples and particularly the knockdowns definitely fit the part and convey the brutality that you'd expect. As far as the entrance sequences go though, it's all bad news. Most fighters use pretty much the same small selection of motions on their way down the ramp, and they do less to inspire fear and awe and more to make you crack up laughing. With the overstated motion of the fighters, they often swan down to the Octagon like they're clutching a fifty-cent coin between their butt cheeks. The close-ups provided only show how ridiculous the overdone facial expressions look under close scrutiny.

The arenas you fight in are readily forgettable with basic surrounds and 2D crowds, and the only thing that saves the game in terms of visual flair is the superb lighting. The fighters are well-realised likenesses, but UFC referee and icon Big John McCarthy looks like someone stuck a bike pump into him. Ewww.

Just another day at training with Hawthorn...

BETTER THAN

UFC THROWDOWN

WORSE THAN

FIGHT NIGHT 2004

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

In-ring animations, real-time damage and blood effects bring the pain home. Arrgh the pain!

What they need to fix

We want more difficulty levels and varied modes for single-player.

The Story Mode allows you to create a fighter from scratch and even choose multiple martial arts to train in. The downside is that you have to sit through three years of simulated training and endless loading screens before you even get to have a real match. If the developer was looking to recreate how intensive and gruelling training is for UFC fighters, it succeeded, but the bottom line is that it's not a lot of fun.

Beyond that, the single-player options, aside from different names and different unlockables are largely similar, and the cheap computer 'intelligence' is incredibly frustrating even on the lowest difficulty settings. The Training Mode is an excellent way to familiarise yourself with your character's moves, but sadly not the defensive and counter-attack techniques that are the crux of the gameplay.

In the wash up, *Sudden Impact* isn't as easy to pick up as a boxing game, and doesn't have the depth to satisfy fighting fanatics. With a price tag of fifty gold ones it's not bad value but you might want to peruse the Platinum collection first to see if there's something you might prefer before laying the cash down. Still, for those with a taste for mixed martial arts or flat out brutality, *Sudden Impact* is well worth a rental. **• Nick O'Shea**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	05	Crisp yet bland visuals and occasionally flaky animation
Sound	05	Decent tunes on menus, but in-game is a bit dead
Gameplay	05	Caught in a limbo between genres
Life span	04	Many modes of play, but none that draw you in

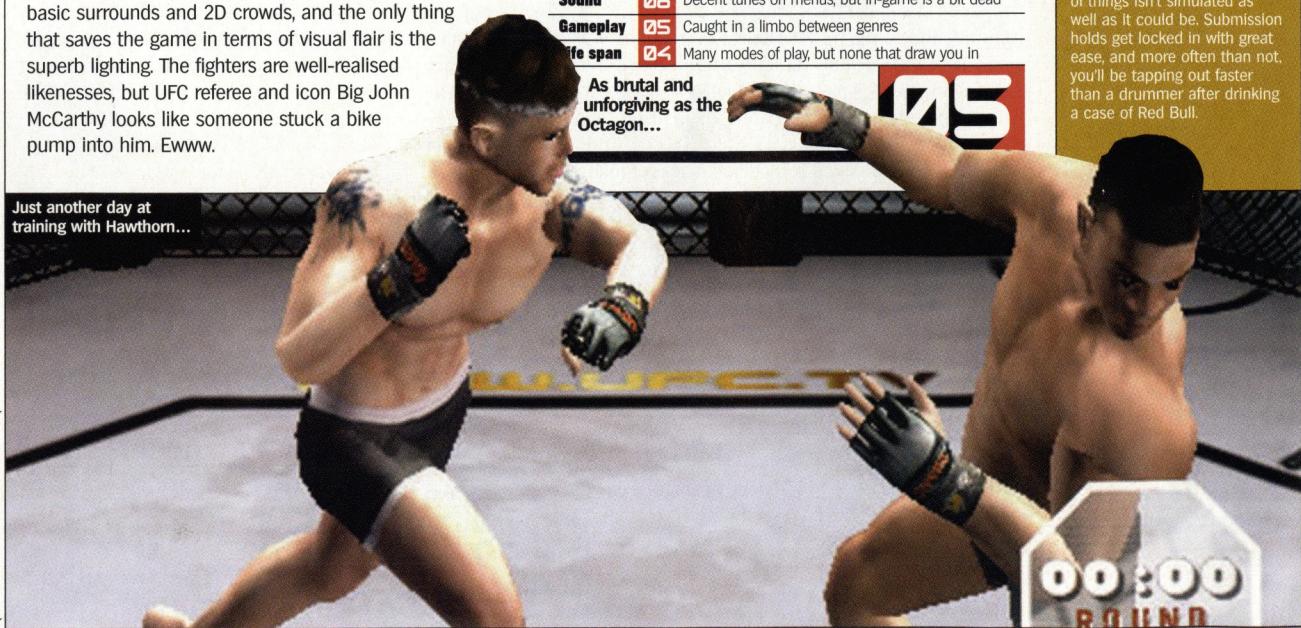
As brutal and unforgiving as the Octagon...

05

TASTE THAT CANVAS! MMMMM!



In the UFC, matches are either over in a matter of moments through powerful strikes, or go for ages as grapplers struggle to lock in a submission. In terms of striking, *Sudden Impact* recreates this well. If you swing wildly, your fighter will get winded and be susceptible to getting knocked out cold if hit hard. On the other hand, the wrestling side of things isn't simulated as well as it could be. Submission holds get locked in with great ease, and more often than not, you'll be tapping out faster than a drummer after drinking a case of Red Bull.





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PLAY-TEST

DEADLY SKIES III / CORVETTE

There are spectacular parts but little speed!



FLIGHT SIM

DEADLY SKIES III

Balls-out dogfight or hair-pulling catfight?

X DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR:	ATARI
DEVELOPER:	KONAMI
PRICE:	\$99.95
PLAYERS:	1
OUT:	NOW
WEBSITE:	WWW.ATARI.COM.AU
60HZ MODE:	YES
WIDESCREEN:	NO
SURROUND SOUND:	YES
ONLINE:	NO



side from the Ace Combat series, PlayStation owners haven't exactly been bombarded with flight sims. The only other notables ones were the very average *Top Gun* and the *Lethal Skies* series.

Deadly Skies III is promising upon takeoff. There are well over 130 planes and other aircraft for you to get about in, covering pretty much every prominent flying vehicle from World War II up until now. There's the reconnaissance-based MiG-23ML and supersonic Jaguar GR1 to the more obscure "Aurora" space jet and Sea King helicopter. They all handle differently and affect your tactics for each mission, which is a plus.

However, it's not too hot once you get off the ground. The missions are generic and can be categorised into three types – anti-air, anti-ground and reconnaissance. There's 60 missions in total, but they're all far too "samey".

Deadly Skies III lacks possibly the most crucial

ingredient that makes a good flight sim – speed. The difference between Mach 1 and Mach 5 is comparable to moving from a brisk walk to a slow jog; it's boring.

As far as the genre goes, *Deadly Skies III* is average. There is plenty of aircraft for the hardcore, but anyone looking for something even remotely exciting should steer well clear of its flight path. **Tristan Ogilvie**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	05	Incredibly detailed planes, absent sense of speed
Sound	08	Top notch effects and soundtrack in surround sound
Gameplay	04	Plenty of missions but they're all the same
Lifespan	05	Gameplay isn't compelling enough to see it through

There's not much that *Deadly Skies III* does that *Ace Combat 5* hasn't already done, and with infinite more class.



Some old Corvette classics appear



01:49:04

RECORD TIME: 00:10:00

SPLIT TIME: 00:42:30



Driving these old cars

reminds us of the '80s!



03:08:09

RECORD TIME: 00:00:00

SPLIT TIME: 00:00:00

RACING

CORVETTE

What happened? Corvettes used to be cool

X DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR:	TAKE 2
DEVELOPER:	STEEL MONKEYS
PRICE:	\$49.95
PLAYERS:	1-2
OUT:	NOW
WEBSITE:	WWW.TAKE2GAMES.CO.UK
60HZ MODE:	NO
WIDESCREEN:	NO
SURROUND SOUND:	NO
ONLINE:	NO



It's hard to believe the Corvette brand is 50 years old. But if Steel Monkeys wanted this game to make us believe that the company was still hip, they failed and instead made us believe that it's old and wrinkly.

No matter which car you choose, they all handle like shopping trolleys. While there are many problems with the driving mechanics, the main issue is spinning out. Don't get us wrong, we like donuts as much as Homer Simpson, but it gives us a dose of road rage when we spin out of control after every turn we take.

Unfortunately it's not just the driving that's bad in Corvette. In Career mode, you will race in different divisions based on the age of the Corvette. But while there are over 50 selectable cars in the other modes, you'll soon find out that the only thing you'll be selecting here is the colour of the car the game has chosen for you. Upgrading is even more bizarre. When you finish in the top three, you will be given parts that can be

installed. Hit **X** and they will automatically be installed and tuned to suit the performance of the vehicle. However, we still noticed no performance differences!

It's unfortunate the game itself wasn't tuned to perfection because it had some extras which could have put it over the finish line, but its dodgy gameplay and aged mechanics just result in it crashing and burning. Not a bad price, but a bad game. **Paul Frew**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	05	The cars and tracks all look pretty good
Sound	05	Standard music that keeps us pumped throughout
Gameplay	01	Ugh, awful
Lifespan	02	You'll most likely quit after your first race

An extremely poor racer that even Corvette fans should stay away from. Unless you're Steve from 90210.





X RACING

INDYCAR SERIES 2005 / WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2004

PLAY-TEST



INDYCAR SERIES 2005

Race away from this one as fast as you can

X DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI
 DEVELOPER: CODEMASTERS
 PRICE: \$99.99
 PLAYERS: 1-8 ONLINE
 OUT: NOW
 WEBSITE: WWW.CODEMASTERS.COM
 60HZ MODE: NO
 WIDESCREEN: NO
 SURROUND SOUND: NO
 ONLINE: NO



here at OPS2 are huge fans of Indy races. Beautiful girls, beer and even the odd fast car. We're excited to see a game but think that Codies have let us down!

The main event is the IndyCar Series mode where you travel around the world competing at the various Indy events. Codemasters has captured all 15 racing tracks well, including the new Twin Ring Motegi Speedway in Japan. You will also be competing against the entire roster of the 2005 IndyCar series who will use real racing manoeuvres to try and beat you to the chequered flag. Unfortunately, these racing manoeuvres aren't at all challenging so you'll find yourself lapping the other racers frequently.

But if you do find some action then please email us here at OPS2 as this seems to be *IndyCar's* major problem. Not only do the graphics look like they've come from a PSone game, but nearly all the tracks are ovals.

So unless you're a huge fan of roundabouts, you won't find much action or fun to be had. It might be fun in real life, but doesn't work as a game.

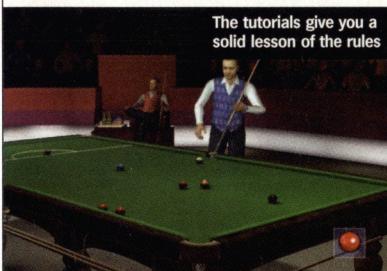
We can list even bargain bin titles like *Ford Racing 2* which would leave *IndyCar Series 2005* looking like a Torana in a Holden V8 race. Unless you're a die-hard fan do a U-turn and look elsewhere. **Paul Frew**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	01	It's so PSone.
Sound	05	The cars sound great but there's not much else
Gameplay	02	Easy to play but you're driving around in circles
Lifespan	01	There's no optional extras here.

A way below average racer that will struggle to interest even the hardest Indy fans.

02



X SNOOKER SIM



WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2004

Got balls?

X DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI
 DEVELOPER: CODEMASTERS
 PRICE: \$99.95
 PLAYERS: 16 (TOURNAMENT)
 OUT: JULY
 WEBSITE: WWW.CODEMASTERS.COM.UK/SNOOKER2004/
 60HZ MODE: NO
 WIDESCREEN: NO
 SURROUND SOUND: NO
 ONLINE: NO



t's been hailed as the most realistic snooker sim ever. It's the battle of the baize, the clash of the cue-balls. If you're a fan of the sport, you'd be silly to miss out on this one.

If this is your first foray into the world of snooker, don't panic – the comprehensive tutorials will see you through. And for those of you who are acquainted with the game's predecessor, *World Championship Snooker 2003*, you've got a whole plethora of upgrades and gameplay additions to enrich your experience in the world of snooker.

For starters, it's no longer all about the Championship. You can compete in ALL the tournaments of the snooker season, including The LG Cup, British Open, UK Championships and European Open. And if that weren't enough realism, you can play as some of the biggest champions – including snooker superstar Stephen Hendry.

The stadiums are well-rendered, but the main focus is, of course, the table. It's clean and user-friendly, and the interface gives clear-cut guides.

The new Classic Match gameplay mode lets you relive some of the greatest moments in the history of snooker. We'd like to say it's nail-biting, but it differs little from the key gameplay. However, you can unlock real footage, so that you can watch and see for yourself how the masters handle their balls.

2004 includes online, so you'll be able to test your skills against real players. Tops! **Michelle Starr**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	Well-constructed 3D, fluid and crisp movement
Sound	06	Cool commentary, but music would've been nice
Gameplay	08	Realistic, and multiple modes of gameplay
Lifespan	06	You have to really be into snooker

Almost as much fun as going to the pool hall. Almost. Then again, you don't have to go home smelling like smoke!

07



dvdreviews

Recommended viewing for your PlayStation 2 cinema system



Surprisingly, not a drop of blood is in this shot!

House Of 1000 Corpses

Director: Rob Zombie Starring: Sid Haig, Karen Black, Bill Moseley, Sheri Moon, Chris Hardwick, Erin Daniels, Dennis Fimple Distributor: Universal Rating: MA15+ Out: Now Price: \$39.95

FILM: Taking its cue from vintage '70s horror films (though this obviously has a bigger budget), Rob Zombie's *House of 1000 Corpses* centres on four kids whose car breaks down. They end up in a house full of lunatics. One by one, the kids are torn apart. The End.

Some of the characters in this are really terrifying. Sid Haig's Captain Spaulding, the owner of a roadside attraction chronicling serial killers, is a highlight. He's freakishly discomforting but entertaining.

Unfortunately, casting is the only thing this film got right. There's nothing very novel here, let alone imaginative, and everything smells of a *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* rehash.

The horror sequences are clouded by either foggy edits or shots of old horror films/TV shows, the storyline is about as weak as post-mix cola, and the finale about as memorable as William Katt's last telemovie. What could've saved the film – lots and lots of blood and gore – is also nowhere to be seen.

Mr Zombie, you say you wanted to honour those '70s horror flicks... Well how about some more blood and gore for starters? **4/10**

EXTRAS: A mildly interesting commentary from Rob Zombie, a disappointing making-of featurette, interviews, trailer, and some amusing audition and rehearsal footage. **6/10**

VERDICT: Both film and extras are below par. Wait for the *Dawn of the Dead* remake instead. **4/10**

EXTRA! EXTRA!

The House of 2000 Corpses?
The sequel to *House of 1000 Corpses* will be titled *The Devil's Rejects* and will reunite pretty much all the original cast.

In this one, the state police head to the house of horrors but unfortunately the rogues have already escaped. Newcomers to the cast include William Forsythe, *American Pie*'s Natasha Lyonne, and Danny Trejo.



Kill Bill: Volume 1

Director: Quentin Tarantino Starring: Uma Thurman, Lucy Liu, Vivica A Fox, Daryl Hannah, Michael Madsen, Sonny Chiba Distributor: Buena Vista Rating: R18+ Out: Now Price: \$34.95



FILM: It had been six years since Quentin Tarantino released a film when he made *Kill Bill*. That might come as a surprise to some, considering his reputation as one of today's most influential and respected filmmakers.

Fans of Tarantino – in particular those left a little disappointed by his previous effort, *Jackie Brown* – will relish what's in store for them. It has all the elements – an excellent musical score (a mix-match of oldies and jazzed-up samurai movie themes), that trademark out-of-sequence chapter design, lengthy, clever chunks of dialogue and of course, blood – a lot of blood. It's the

slice 'n' dice that gives this effort a different feel. Not a bad feel, but a good feel. One that'll have audiences howling with laughter, and others – most likely those few who don't understand the references – sick to their stomachs.

Like the first time you saw *Pulp Fiction*, you initially won't be sure what to think... but you know you loved it. **8/10**

EXTRAS: Trailers, a couple of music videos, and an entertaining, but hardly edifying making-of. Expect a special edition DVD to be released along with Vol 2. **3/10**

VERDICT: A great film, but with hardly any extras, just rent the DVD, and save your money for the forthcoming special edition. **4/10**

EXTRA! EXTRA!

TARANTINO SHOUTOUTS

Tarantino always includes numerous references to movie classics. here are more but Uma Thurman's yellow track-suit is a direct homage to the one worn by Bruce Lee in *Game of Death*; the Deadly Viper Assassination squad was inspired by Fox Force Five, the fictional TV pilot that Mia Wallace (Uma Thurman) filmed in *Pulp Fiction*; Sonny Chiba's character Hattori Hanzo, is meant to be a recent descendant of his character from *Hattori Hanzo: Kage no Gundan* (1980).



Beats the rides at the Easter show

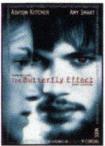
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For the inside scoop on all the latest DVD releases grab yourself a copy of **What DVD. NOW!**



The Butterfly Effect: The Director's Cut

Directors: Eric Bress, J. Mackye Gruber **Starring:** Ashton Kutcher, Melora Walters, Amy Smart, Fisher, Eldon Henson **Distributor:** Roadshow **Rating:** MA15+ **Out:** August **Price:** \$39.95



FILM: Ashton Kutcher plays Evan, a boy prone to mysterious blackouts. Through keeping a journal of his thoughts and feelings, he hopes to work out what triggers them, but instead ends up in his 20s being able to read his old journal and travel back through time to experience the periods during which he was out cold. Around the same time, he returns to visit his childhood friend and sweetheart, Kayleigh (Smart), who he said he would return for. He never did, and now she is an emotional wreck working a dead-end job in a diner. When he brings up her sordid past, she later suicides.

Wracked with guilt, Evan uses his journal to return to the moment where her father sexually assaulted her and changes events. However,

although it solves one situation, it creates another. Again and again Evan returns to the past, but each time he thinks he has made everything perfect, another unpleasant kink appears in the time continuum. Chaos theory has been used in movies before, but rarely to this effect. Moody and at times heart-stopping in a *Sixth Sense* sort of way, this is Ashton Kutcher's first must-see film. **7/10**

EXTRAS: A fun, interesting commentary from the directors, a trivia-packed text commentary, a documentary about the how the directors got together and wrote the movie, an effects doco, info about chaos theory and time travel, deleted scenes. **8/10**

VERDICT: You have not seen *The Butterfly Effect* unless you've seen the DVD edition – it adds some extra spice. Do yourself a favour and put it at the top of your must-buy list. **JB KA**

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Hooyay for DVD!

As we learn on the commentary, *The Butterfly Effect* was a controversial movie. Most studios didn't want to touch it, and although New Line was more receptive, it obviously had some conditions of its own. As a result, the cinema version featured a climax that came close to being a cop-out in comparison. With the pressure of box office success relieved, Eric Bress and J. Mackye Gruber were able to bring us the movie as it was conceived in their minds. Consequently, other scenes were restored and the thematic lines are stronger. Three cheers for DVD!



"He's sick and tired of looking for his car. Dude."



Enter The Dragon: Special Edition

Director: Robert Clouse **Starring:** Bruce Lee, John Saxon, Ahna Capri, Bob Wall, Jim Kelly **Distributor:** Warner Bros **Rating:** TBC **Out:** Now **Price:** \$34.95

FILM: The first major kung-fu film to be jointly backed by US and Hong Kong studios, 31 years after its 1973 release, time has not dimmed the genre-defining legacy of *Enter The Dragon*. Now the film has been returned to its original unexpurgated glory thanks to the inclusion of three minutes of footage lopped off the original US release – what we get is a little more personal Lee philosophy and the infamous 20-second Nunchaku scene added back to the fray.

Hokum plot notwithstanding, as Shaolin monk Lee (at the behest of the British government) infiltrates Han's island fortress to kick ass and break up and undercover opium concern under the guise of entering a hard-as-nails martial arts tournament, the great

locations and the brilliant soundtrack all take a back seat to Lee's well choreographed but seemingly effortless fights.

While Jackie Chan might have proved to be funnier and more visually inventive since Lee's poise, strobe-fast speed and believability are still mesmerising to watch. No serious DVD collection is complete without this. **10/10**

EXTRAS: Introduction by Linda Lee Cadwell, okay commentary by the producer and writer, music only track, Bruce Lee interviews, 1973 making-of featurette, video of Bruce Lee working out, trailers, TV spots, etc **6/10**

VERDICT: The definitive martial arts film, the charismatic Lee, the missing bits put back in, the breathtaking fighting... finally, DVD does justice to the chop-socky masterpiece. Don't think. Feel. **JB DR**

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Bruce Lee versus Jackie Chan

If you're a fan of kung-fu movies, you'll appreciate that Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan are the masters of the genre. Everyone has a favourite – Lee's lightning-fast, gob-smacking technique and mystical philosophy, or Chan's ludicrously dangerous stunt work and inventive choreography. But what you may not know is that the two actually did perform together, in *Enter The Dragon*. Jackie Chan was an extra on the movie, and you can see Bruce Lee grabbing him by the hair breaking his neck near the end of the film, if you watch closely.



Fighting games like Tekken owe a lot to our man Bruce

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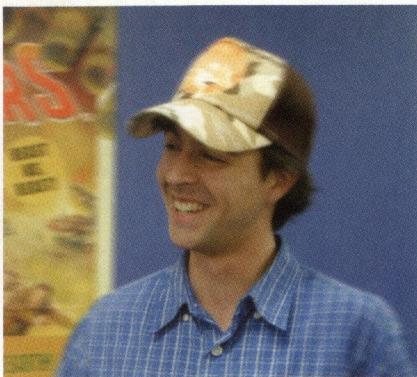
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RE-BOOT

Robots and Hitmen are put in their place this month!



No longer the cute little toys you remember, the robots in disguise have transformed themselves into one of the year's best action games. It may be great but its difficulty is of the 'put your head in a vice and start spinning the handle like a hyperactive ice skater' variety. We've hammered away at the game until nothing but a pile of scrap metal is left for you to piece though. On top of that we've also nuked out a full solution for the hard-as-a-coffin-nail-Hitman: Contracts. Aren't we good to you?

JAMES ELLIS
Tips Editor

IN RE-BOOT THIS MONTH...

78	TRANSFORMERS	TACTICS
84	HITMAN: CONTRACTS	TACTICS
92	SHREK 2	TIPS
92	TRANSFORMERS	TIPS
92	TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU	TIPS
92	ROGUE OPS	TIPS

BLAST YOUR WAY THROUGH THIS AUSSIE CLASSIC! TRANSFORMERS

Beat every level and find every Minicon and Datacon!

ROBOTS IN DISGUISE

Selecting the right Transformer is just like selecting the right girlfriend – choose wisely otherwise you'll be left a wreck



OPTIMUS PRIME

STRENGTHS: Optimus is a powerhouse who can take the most amount of punishment from the Decepticons.

WEAKNESSES: When in vehicle mode, Optimus is a little slow getting from first to second gear.

BEST ATTACK: Running down enemies in vehicle mode.



RED ALERT

STRENGTHS: Fast and powerful. Can take a fair amount of punishment but not as much as Optimus can.

WEAKNESSES: Our boy Red can't hold as many Minicons as Optimus so your choice of secondary weapons will be limited.

BEST ATTACK: Strafing while attacking is highly effective.



HOTSHOT

STRENGTHS: He's by far the fastest and most agile robot.

WEAKNESSES: He's extremely fragile. Don't even think of taking down enemies in vehicle mode or you'll be written off faster than a Daihatsu.

BEST ATTACK: Running away from trouble and going into recon mode to take out Decepticons.

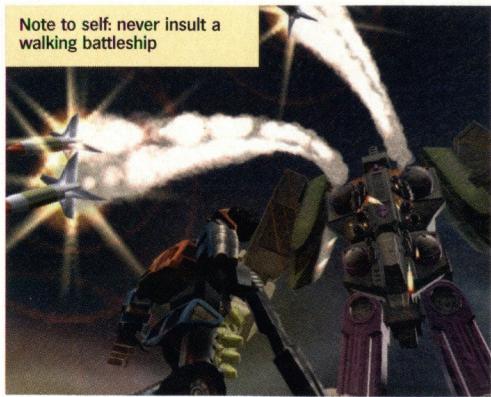
LEVEL 1: AMAZON

Follow the prompts until you're standing at the top of the cliff. Transform into vehicle mode and run down the Decepticons guarding the Minicon. Transform back into robot mode to take down any other Decepticons in the vicinity. There should be some on both sides of the riverbank that you'll be able to kill in recon mode (press \odot). Equip the Minicon and move toward the bridge. Take out the Decepticon waiting there before activating the warp gate. Cross the bridge and follow the bank of the river to find another Minicon. Equip it before going back to the bridge. At the top of the bank go into recon mode and take out the Decepticons wandering around. Kill the ones that are closer to you first, then work backwards. Head up the stairs toward the temple to find two more Decepticons guarding the warp gate. Blast them, activate the gate and head inside. Stay at the top of the temple and go into recon mode. Take down the yellow and blue Decepticons first.

Head down and equip the Minicon. Climb the rubble and make your way along the top of the temple. Use the pillars as cover to take down any Decepticons in sight. After you

kill these guys look down below to find a Datacon. Go back the way you came and pick up another Datacon at the end of the temple. Now go into recon mode and take out the bigger Decepticons before blasting the rest. Jump to the ground and transform into vehicle mode. Floor it and take out as many enemies as you can before transforming and blasting the rest. Look up into the bushes to find some Decepticons guarding a light. Kill them in recon mode then collect the Datacon. Look around to find another Datacon. Now go back to the village where the bridge was. Go into recon mode to take out the Decepticon on the other side of it and then transform into vehicle mode to cross it.

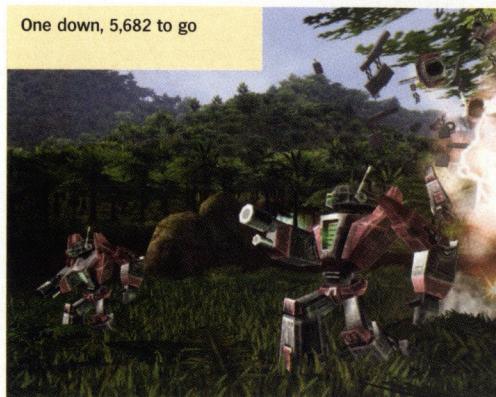
Activate the gate and follow the dirt path until you run into a fallen tree. Take out the enemy with a couple of headshots before transforming and hitting the road. Run down as many Decepticons as you can and if you need to finish any stragglers off just transform to robot mode and blow them away. When you reach the spider-like Decepticon, stay behind it to avoid its attacks while you blast it with rockets and plasma shots. Activate the warp gate, collect the Minicon and cross the ravine. Look down



Note to self: never insult a walking battleship



Use your vehicle mode to make Decepticon roadkill



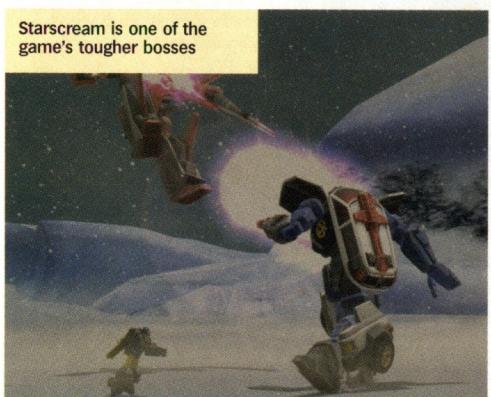
One down, 5,682 to go

and right to find a cave that has a Minicon inside. Send it to HQ then go back to the save point. Head up the mountain running down any Decepticons in sight while making your way towards the ruins. Collect another Minicon and equip it. Drive behind the spider Decepticon so you can turn it in to scrap metal, then activate gate and head towards the structure.

Boss battle: If you hold down your primary trigger button and shoot a few missiles every now and then, while avoiding his missile attacks, you'll transform the big unit into a junkyard very quickly.

LEVEL 2: ANTARCTICA

Turn around and walk past the save point to find a Datacon. Go back to the start point and make your way along the canyon. Go into recon mode and take out the



Starscream is one of the game's tougher bosses

cycloptic Decepticon. Wait for the rest of the squad to drop and take them out in recon mode as well. Cross the river and head up the rock face to collect the Minicon. Equip it before dropping back down and activating the warp gate. When you reach the crevasse go into recon mode and take out as many enemies as you can before heading down to the bottom. Head for the save point near the ship in vehicle mode. If you get ambushed by Decepticons, run them down and keep going. When you get far enough away from them, transform back to robot mode and finish them off with your weapons in recon mode.

Once you're at the ship, transform back into vehicle mode, line yourself up with the beacon and reverse using L1. Use the Transformer jump to land on top of the ship so you can collect the Minicon. Send it to HQ then go and collect the Datacon near the water – there should be a spider Decepticon that you can take out in recon mode close by. Use the trenches as cover from its beam. Once you've defeated it go collect the next Minicon and send it to HQ. Go back to the tanker and cross the water. Answer the call and go into recon mode. Take out the Decepticons from biggest to smallest. If they get too close then head back to the water and return to recon mode to finish them off. When it's clear head to the village to collect the Datacon and equip the Minicon.

Boss battle: Make sure you have Deflector, Sparkjump and Flashbang equipped before taking on Starscream. As soon as you get a chance, blast him with missiles while running backwards. When he transforms into the jet, try to keep your crosshairs aimed on him. Shoot missiles while he's hovering in the air then when he comes in for a diving attack hold down your primary weapon trigger to give him an electric shock. Continue until you're watching the next cut-scene.

HOST RECON

You've got the look

By hitting \textcircled{C} you will go into a first-person view where you can zoom in and out with the R3 button. The best time to use recon mode is as soon as you spot a Decepticon. After you pick up Lookout, you'll be able to lock-on to the heads of enemies and kill them with one shot. This is extremely useful against large armies of Decepticons in Alaska and Pacific Islands. You'll also need it during the boss battle against Tidal Wave.



Use headshots to minimise ammunition wastage

LEVEL 3: DEEP AMAZON

Before taking one step, look around to find a



beacon. Head in this direction and stop once you notice there are Decepticons ahead. Go into recon mode to take them out, starting with the big unit. When it's safe, go and equip the new Minicon. Take another look around to find another glowing light. Head toward it and stop when you run into the dog-like Decepticon. Stay as close as you can to it and pistol-whip it until it falls to the ground so you can finish it off with plasma shots. Collect the Datacon and head to the save point. Before crossing the bridge, go into recon mode and take out the turrets on either side of the bridge and any Decepticons hanging about.

Once you've crossed the bridge go back into recon mode and scout the temple. Take out the Decepticons first and then aim for the turrets. When you think it's safe to continue head up to

RE-BOOT

The little Transformers are always the toughest



Keep moving to dodge the first boss's attacks



the temple. Before going inside the temple, explore the surroundings to find a Datacon. If you look down toward where you came up from you'll notice two glowing beacons. Transform and roll out to these locations to find a Datacon and a Minicon. Send it to HQ and go back to the temple. Climb the ruins to find another Datacon. Continue along and kill some Decepticons at the entrance. Travel through the hallways knocking off any enemies you come across. Use the corners as cover if your energon gets low but if you aim at the head and use the sniper rifle then you shouldn't get beaten too badly. When you reach the first open area, find a

Attacking the spider robots from behind is the safe option



TRANSFORMER JUMP

Faster than a speeding locomotive

The transformer jump is ideal to get to glowing lights before you pick up Highjump. To perform this jump you'll need to have some distance between you and your landing spot. Judge your distance based on your Transformer's speed (Optimus will need more space than Hot Shot). Floor it when you think you're at the right distance and when you're a couple of car spaces away from the target, hit **A** to transform and you should launch into the air and onto the landing spot. Just don't try this jump when you're close to areas where you can fall to your death.



Minicon in the alcove that you can send to HQ. In the next area you will find an open passage. Push **X** to activate a lift and to meet Cyclonus.

Boss battle: Have Safeguard, Highgear, Skirmish and Lock-on equipped to face Cyclonus. Head down to the ground using the temple's levels as stairs. Run backwards when Cyclonus runs at you shooting him in the head with your rockets. When he's in the air, keep your crosshairs locked on him and shoot him with plasma shots while your missiles reload. Once they're refilled, shoot them off as well. If you're in the open jump left or right when Cyclonus launches an attack but try to stay close to rubble and use it as cover.

LEVEL 4: MID-ATLANTIC

Transform into vehicle mode and head towards the rocks. When you see the dropship shadows, transform back into robot mode and go into recon mode. Take out the Decepticons with headshots using the sniper rifle. The easiest way to catch them is when they stop walking and scan the area. When it's clear, make your way to the rocks. Turn on Deflector and take out the flying Decepticon. Equip the Minicon and get ready to hit the skies. Launch yourself from the highest part of the rock and glide to the island with the glowing light. Collect the Datacon and head over to the next rocky island. Use your recon mode to take out the flying Decepticon hovering near the next rock island. When he's dead, glide to the save point island.

Go to the highest point again and glide to the ship. Stay at the very back of the ship and fire everything you've got. Don't worry too much about taking cover as they're only baby Decepticons like the ones you faced in Level 1. Head up the right side of the tanker until you reach a dead end and turn left to find another Decepticon army. When the next bunch of enemies arrive, use recon mode to take them out and then use the elevator to head inside the ship. Activate the warp gate. Stand back far enough so you can take out the next army of Decepticons but if they fire they won't hit you. When it's nothing but a pile of metal, glide over there and go into recon mode to take care of the

next army of Decepticons opposite you. Go through the hallway and take the elevator to a command room. Take down anyone inside and continue on.

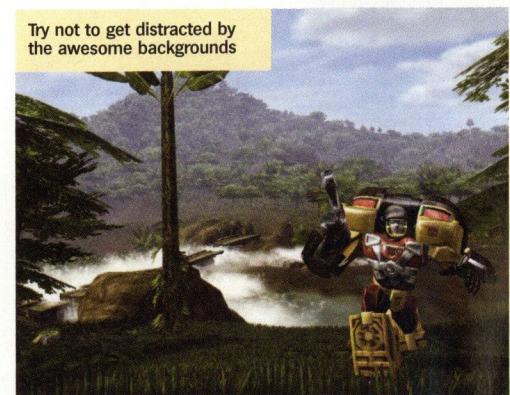
Follow the hallways until you reach a Decepticon logo, taking down all the Decepticons in your way. The switch to the door is on the right. Take the lift up and activate the next gate. Keep your distance here and enter recon mode. Take out the silver Decepticon first with a couple of headshots, then finish off his army. Take the next lift up and get ready for Tidal Wave.

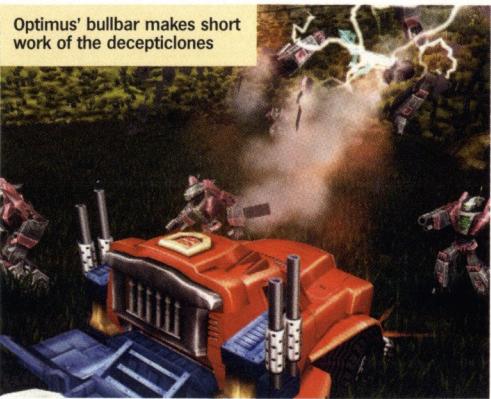
Boss battle: Make sure you have Lookout selected for this battle. Aim for Tidal Wave's head in recon mode to take him down. If you see any rockets or machinegun fire coming your way, simply do a lap around the island to avoid it. Then go back to recon mode to fire your next set of bullets.

LEVEL 5: ALASKA

Climb up the incline near the starting point and line yourself up with the island. Glide over and collect a Minicon that can be sent to HQ. Go back to the shore and take a stroll along it. When you spot the rolling Decepticons go into recon mode and shoot them in the head with the sniper rifle. You can only do this when they're not rolling around, so wait for them to transform and start their patrol. Continue along the shore slowly until you spot an army of Decepticons. Go back into recon mode taking out the silver one first before blowing

Try not to get distracted by the awesome backgrounds





up the rest. Collect the Minicon and equip it.

Head through the canyon knocking off Decepticons along the way and activating a warp gate. When you reach the end of the canyon go into recon mode. Take out anyone standing around – don't forget the ones in the dropship. There are two on each side of it. Alternatively, you can just kill two of the Decepticons facing you and just blow up the ship. Head into the next canyon avoiding the attacks from above. Activate the next warp gate and run to the end of the canyon to find an ice structure you can jump on to. Make your way up and kill any Decepticons shooting you. Jump from platform to platform and into another canyon. Run directly at the Decepticons and they'll immediately run away. Go into recon mode and take them out now while their backs are turned. There are a whole load of Decepticons here so it's best to start off by taking out the armies first and then the spider Decepticons while using the ice as cover. When it's clear, go into the middle and send another Minicon to HQ. Follow the edge around until you find a glowing light on a ledge. You should also see an island close by that will give you enough height so you can glide over to



collect the Datacon.

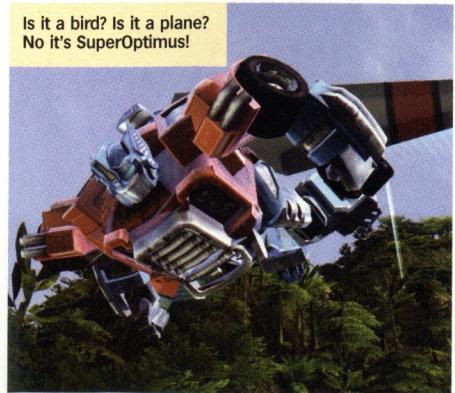
Stay on this ledge until you're in another open area.

Look for a beacon just below you that you can glide to and collect. Head for the next canyon that features a warp gate and more Decepticons. Try to use cover as much as possible here but you need to be quick with your attacks otherwise you'll get surrounded. Climb the pillar and jump from one ledge to the other until you're able to continue on properly. Find a safe spot and go into recon mode to take down everything in sight. When things start getting too tense take cover and let your weapons reload. Try to aim for the head every time you fire your weapon. When it's nothing but a scrap heap go in and collect a Minicon that you'll need to equip if you want to go on. Head forward to find a cave with a couple of Decepticons inside. Take them out and activate the warp gate. Use the rocks to get access to the platforms remembering you can jump higher now. When you enter your first cave and come to a fork in the road take the right path to find a Datacon. Go back to the fork to run into another fork. Take the left tunnel this time to find another Datacon. Go back and continue until you're back in the main cave, only a little higher up. Don't go for the glowing light as you can't reach it with the jump. Head for the next Decepticon and take it out with a headshot. Head for the exit and activate the warp gate. Go back to the exit of the cave and use it as cover to take out the Decepticons in the area. Move along the path on the right to find another beacon. Unfortunately you'll have to come back and get it because it's time

GLIDING

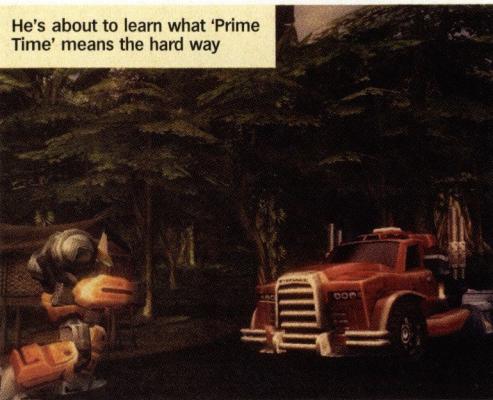
To infinity and beyond

Gliding is one of the trickier skills to learn in *Transformers*. You'll need to find the highest point possible to launch from if you want to make the distance. When in flight, try to keep things steady. When it looks like you're going to take a dive, pull up on the stick and you should float back to a safe altitude. Then glide from left to right so you can get some air under those wings. Don't forget to hit \times when you reach a safe landing spot.



RE-BOOT

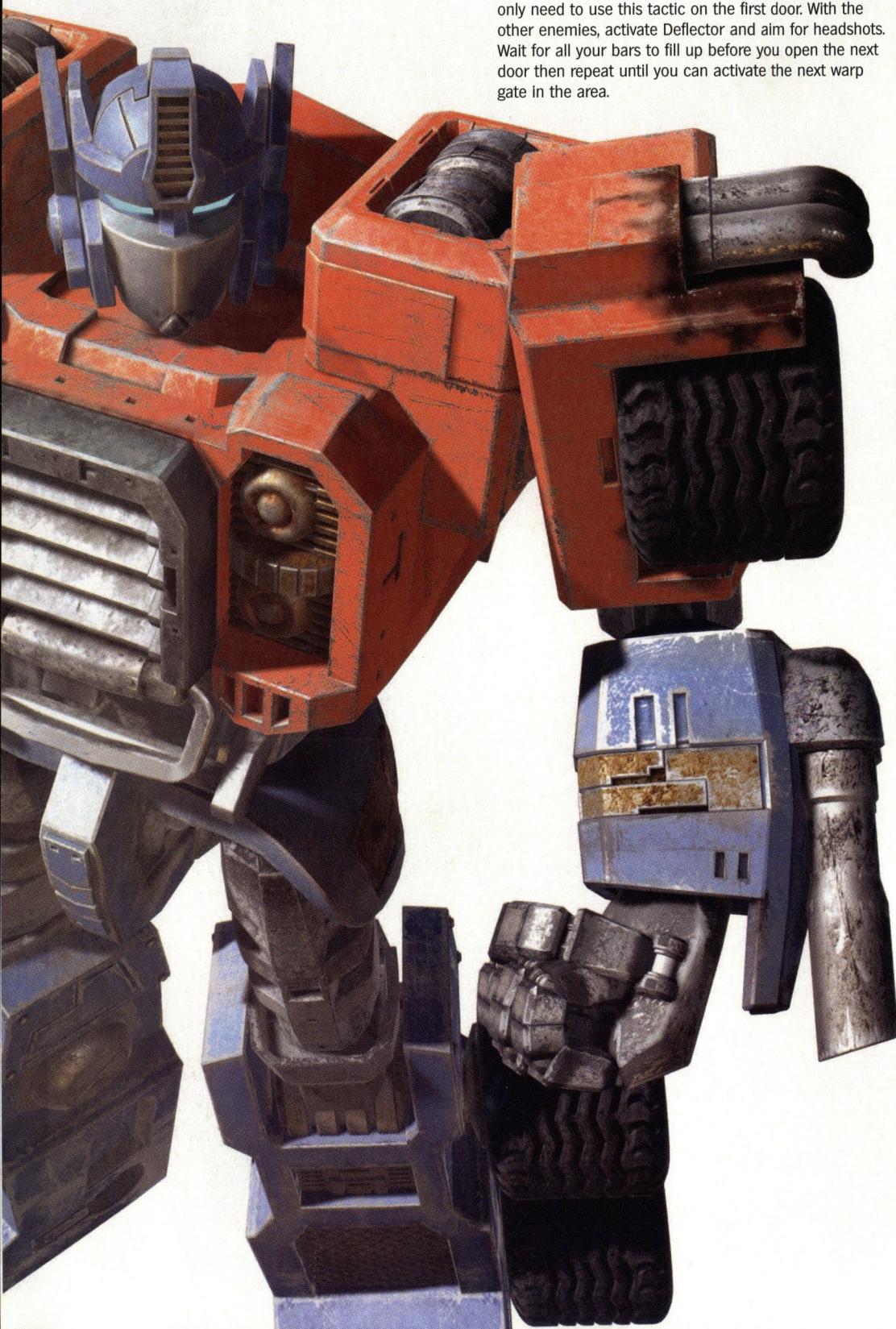
He's about to learn what 'Prime Time' means the hard way



to battle it out with Starscream all over again. Use the same tactics and you'll be fine.

LEVEL 6: STARSHIP

Have Deflector and Highjump equipped before you start this level. Make your way to the first compartment which, of course, is infested with enemies. Time your attacks so that you don't lose too much damage because you're going to need it in the long run. When it's clear, make your way up the ramp until you reach a switch. Take cover again to take out the new batch of reinforcements. Once again, time your attacks and try to learn the patterns of enemy fire so you know when the best time to launch an attack is. After the killing spree, take the lift the reinforcements came on and make your way to the next doorway. Open the door, then run back to find cover because there will be some Decepticons waiting for you. This will happen with every door you open but you only need to use this tactic on the first door. With the other enemies, activate Deflector and aim for headshots. Wait for all your bars to fill up before you open the next door then repeat until you can activate the next warp gate in the area.

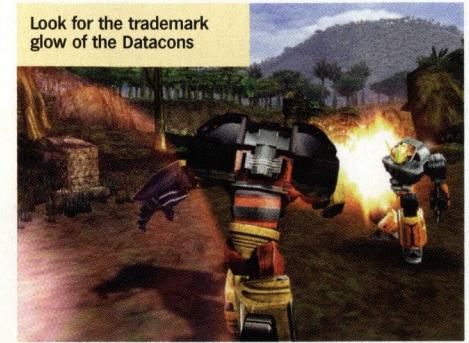


OLD SCHOOL FUN

Public Service Announcements

While the majority of the Datacon you find may be just concept art and music, there are a couple of golden moments including Public Service Announcements featuring Transformers from the old cartoon series. Do not miss these.

Look for the trademark glow of the Datacons



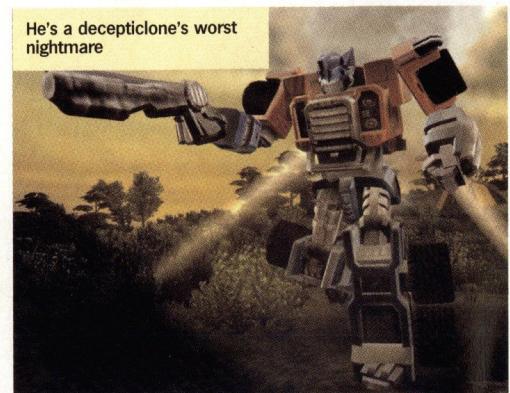
The next army of Decepticons is tame compared to what you've just been through so just take them out with a flurry of plasma shots to the head. Pick up a Minicon and send it to HQ. Go to the bridge only to be interrupted by Starscream. When you come back from the cut-scene you'll find yourself just behind the bridge. Use the bridge lift as a stairway and the glowing lights as a guide to make your way up. Use the doorframes to make your way to the lift and go up a level. Go to the opening with the orange lights behind it. Jump up the wall to find a Datacon. Flick the switch and use the elevator to get to the next section. Cross the next gap and pick up another Datacon in the dropship. Make your way to the next compartment and follow the ramp up to find yet another glowing light. Stick to the left and walk along the ledge toward the light. Jump up onto its ledge to grab it. Jump back down and make your way along the gaps being careful not to fall. Jump up the wall to reach the next Datacon. Stay on the ledge and turn left. Walk slowly all the way to the end of the room to pick up the last Datacon of the level. Go back to the exit and jump out of the ship. Activate the warp gate and prepare to battle Starscream.

Boss battle: Have Bulletproof, Kickback, Sparkjump and Watchdog equipped for this battle. Let Starscream come to you and when he's close enough, shower him with mines. Then use Sparkjump until your mines reload to full. When Starscream uses his attacks guard yourself with Bulletproof.

LEVEL 7: PACIFIC ISLANDS

Have Slipstream, Deflector and Lookout selected before starting the level. Go straight into recon mode and take out the Decepticons near the cliffs. If you take them all out with headshots then you should be able to kill them all without taking any damage. Make your way to where

He's a decepticon's worst nightmare



the Decepticons were and glide to the island. Take out the turret while you're in the air and then land in the spot where it used to be. Activate the warp gate and change your Minicon arsenal so you have Lock-on. Head to the lighthouse and collect the Datacon then go to the front of it. Warp inside and immediately aim for the heads of the big units. Jump sideways to avoid attacks and use Deflector while your missiles reload.

Go back to the warp gate and head left. Take out the turrets first then go for the silver Decepticons. When they're out of the picture you can run down anything else in vehicle mode. The central pillar is great for cover if your energon gets low. Go back to the warp gate and now head right. Take out the turrets first then go to the hallway so you can use it as cover. Now just pick off the rest of the Decepticons hanging out. Follow the track until you're close to a canyon and near a waterfall. Glide across the canyon ignoring any attacks and once you land head straight for the warp gate. Follow the orders you've been given and go to the settlement to collect a Minicon that you should send to HQ. Go into recon mode and take down the Decepticons in the area before continuing on to the village. Shoot the tanks near the cliff to find another Minicon. Equip this one and return to the last warp gate. Move right away and get behind a pillar. Time your attacks and don't try to kill too many Decepticons at once. Try and take out about four at a time, then take a break.

Once it's clear, go back to the save point and take another right. Make sure you have your armour equipped and get ready to unleash everything you've got. Try to keep running and jumping to avoid attacks. Once again, aim for the head as it will kill them a lot quicker. Go back to the warp gate and take the left path. Take out the turrets first and then transform into vehicle mode to take down the rest. Go to the far side of the canyon and walk along the cliff edge. Launch from here and glide toward the village but aim for the glowing light. Collect the Datacon and head back to the warp gate so you can go back to HQ. Equip Lookout and warp back.

Go back to the village and do a bit of rock climbing. When you spot the cycloptic Decepticons go into recon mode and blast them with the sniper rifle. Make your way to the next warp gate and activate it. Head to the next canyon using your wings and pick up a Minicon that can go to HQ. Glide back to the warp gate and go to the top of the pinnacle and look down to find another Minicon that can be sent to HQ. Go back to the warp gate and up the ledge where you'll find two more turrets. Take them out and then glide to the next warp gate. Pick



up a Datacon and activate the gate while you're here. Now jump off the right side of the volcano and glide along the wall of it to a glowing light. Pick up the Minicon and equip it. Go back to the warp gate and go back to HQ to equip Fullspeed.

Warp back and go back up the slope. Jump off the slope and glide across the crater aiming straight ahead. When you see a glowing light, glide toward it and pick the last Minicon in the game (that should be equipped). Head back towards the save and take out the turrets first. Then take out the rest of the armies of Decepticons with everything you've got. Now head towards the middle bunker and use the terrain as cover to avoid the attacks. They're the exact same amount of Decepticons as before so you should know the attacks and know how to avoid them. Use the same technique as before to get past this lot. Repeat again on the final bunker. Go to the volcano warp gate and equip Bulletproof, Deflector, Firefight and Failsafe because you're about to go one-on-one with Megatron.

Boss battle: Jump into the crater aiming for the ramp beneath the ledge you jumped from. Walk to the large Decepticon logo and start circling around him while your blaster charges. When it's up high enough, shoot him. Stay as far away from him as you can and jump if he tries to grab you. When he transforms, shoot him with missiles. Repeat until he gives up.

LEVEL 8: CYBERTON

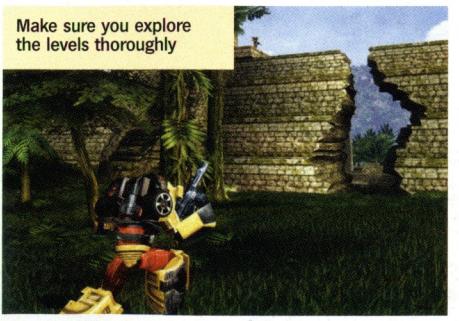
This is just one big boss battle with Unicron. Try using the airbrake as often as possible to keep yourself steady and keep your crosshairs targeted on Unicron. Circle him at full pace. Navigate yourself into Unicron's mouth avoiding the edges and his beam. Once inside, line up your crosshairs on the bright spot and shoot. Once you've done this three times he'll run away. Keep up with him and when he slows down, continue using the same technique. After four more hits it'll be all over for Unicron and the game. Well done.

BACK IT UP

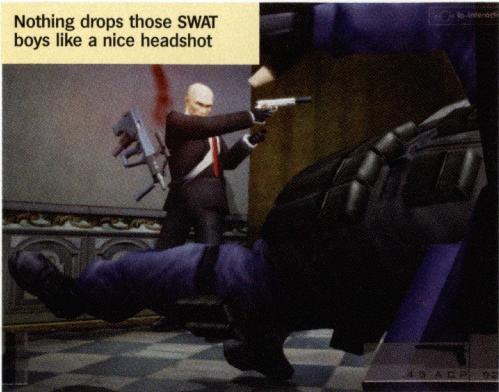
It's time to go on a hunting trip

You may notice that after finishing some of the levels you are still missing Datacons and/or Minicons. Once you pick up Shepherd, all you need to do is activate him during the levels and make your way toward the targets. It's also a good idea to take Slipstream and Highjump with you as most of the locations involve you either gliding to that destination or jumping there.

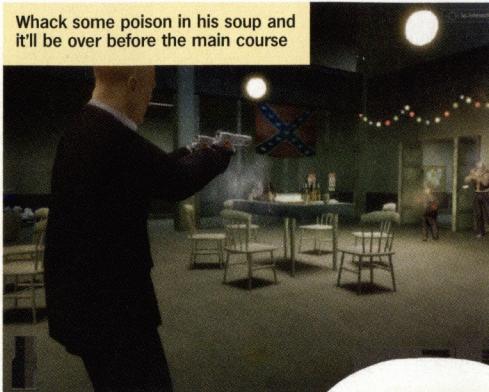
Make sure you explore the levels thoroughly



Nothing drops those SWAT boys like a nice headshot



Whack some poison in his soup and it'll be over before the main course



TOP TIPS TO TAKE DOWN THOSE PESKY MARKS!

HITMAN: CONTRACTS

Expert tactics and solutions for every mission

GREATEST HITS

■ WHO WANTS TO BE A SILENT ASSASSIN

There is a multitude of ways to accomplish each of the tasks in *Hitman: Contracts*. You can don disguises, use poisons, place explosives, slit people's throats, or just go into each level, guns blazing. In fact, if you decide to take the latter option you'll find yourself watching the game's end credits after a day. Of course, that's not what being a real hitman is about, but it is an option if you just can't beat one of the tougher missions.

True assassins remain silent, use stealth, and vanish like a fart in the wind. At the end of each mission you're greeted with a statistics screen revealing if you accomplished the hit like a professional or a mass murderer. The grandest rating, of course, is Silent Assassin. This means you've accomplished your mission and got to safety without being detected.

The following guide will outline how to obtain the Silent Assassin rating for each level on the game's "Normal" difficulty. By getting the Silent Assassin rating you also unlock a series of guns that are added to your murderous arsenal – just in case you ever feel like acting out those mass murderer tendencies in the future.

■ AROUSING SUSPICION?

Hitman rookies may constantly experience their cover being blown without any obvious reason. While the game could use some polish in this area, most of the



time there is a reason behind it.

Disguises are the main culprit, as some hide your true identity better than others. You can get away with most disguises as long as you don't run or dawdle close to similarly dressed enemies, and that there hasn't been a call sent around to look for a character matching your description. These calls usually come about because the people you've knocked out with a syringe have just woken up (depending on the difficulty, the syringe keeps characters knocked out for different periods of time). After waking up characters will notice that their clothes are missing and immediately report the event.

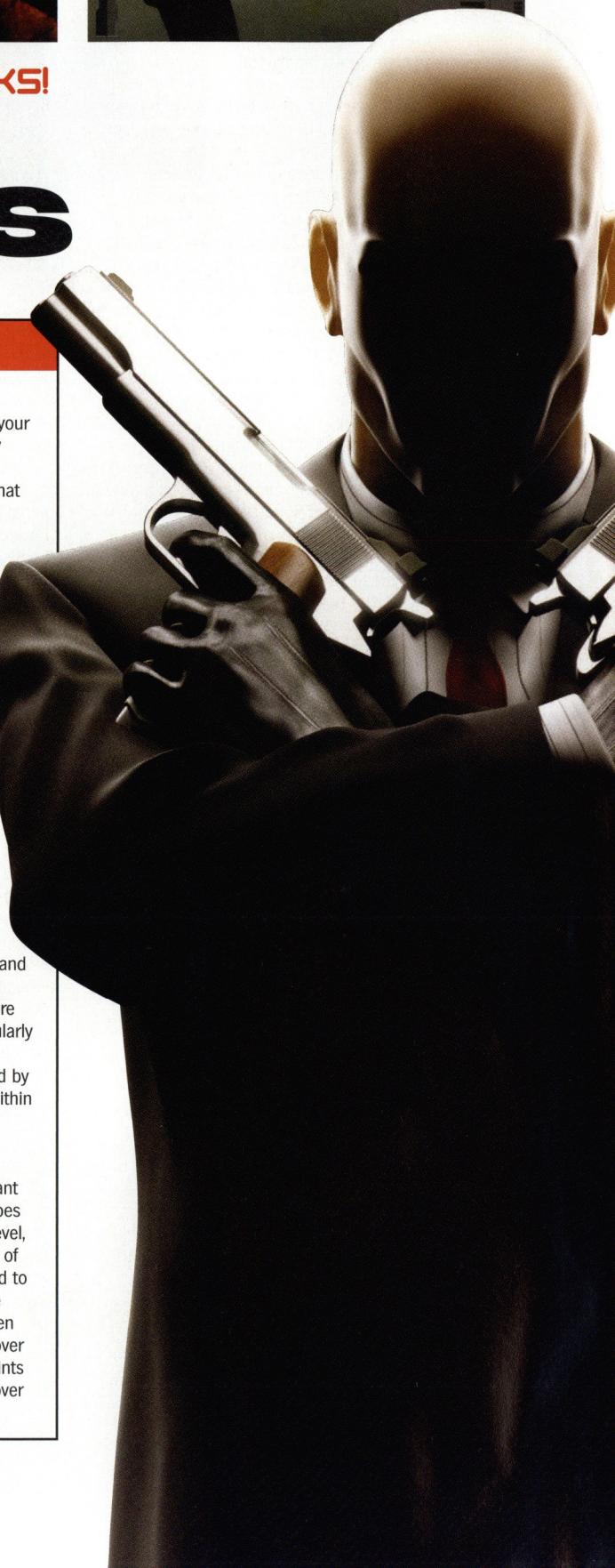
■ SNEAKING AND CROUCHING

By pressing the L2 button you can slow Agent 47 down to do one of two speeds of movement: sneaking and crouching. Crouching is like casual sneaking. It's not the quietest method, but it's definitely quieter than walking. Sneaking is the much slower, but stealthier movement you use on people you're about to fibre wire or stab with a syringe. It makes no noise at all, but its slow speed means enemies can turn around and see you with a weapon in hand – prompting them to go ballistic.

Try to move as close as you can to them before you reveal your weapon and strike. This is particularly useful for enemies like biker leader Rutger Van Leuven and Commander Bjarkov (who are fooled by your disguise at the start) allowing you to stroll within striking distance.

■ MAP

You'll need to be good at using the map if you want to earn all the Silent Assassin ratings. Not only does the map give you a birds-eye view of the entire level, but on Normal difficulty you can see the location of enemies and the direction they're facing. Get used to flicking through each of the different layers of the map as well because this will come in handy when dealing with guards whose patrol routes stretch over multiple maps. Using the map along with the "Points of Interest" is also the most efficient way to discover new solutions for each level.



ASYLUM AFTERMATH**SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD:
DUAL CZ2000 PISTOLS**

Grab the car keys from the body ahead of you, and check your map. Follow the outlined path till you come to the elevator. Save your game.

Go up to the second floor and put on the clothes of the nearby dead patient. Move through the double doors opposite the lift. Move through the opposite double doors and walk left down the stairs. An officer will order you into the lab on the left. Hop in here and note the guard who patrols the spiral staircase. Follow him from a safe distance up to the second floor and into the room with the balcony. Hide in the bottom-left corner of the room until he exits. Sneak out onto the balcony above the ladder and save your game.

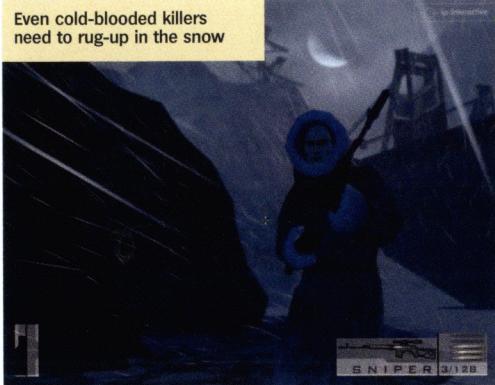
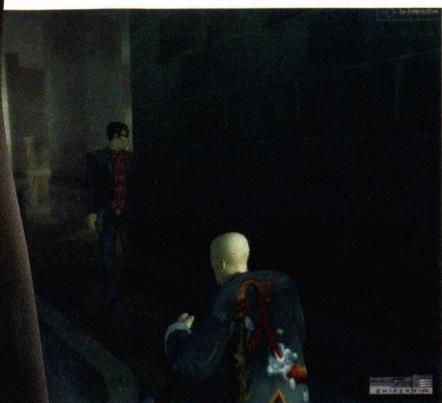
Your next objective is to sneak into the parked car below without being spotted by the patrolling guard. It's easier if you split your ladder descent into two parts. Get yourself into position by climbing halfway down the ladder, then time the rest of your descent so you get to the ground as the guard arrives at the front side of the car

closest to you. While moving to the car from here, your main aim is to keep the guard's back to you – even if that means swinging out so you're almost in front of the car yourself. As he moves to the rear, hop into the driver's seat and make your escape.

THE MEAT KING'S PARTY**SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD:
DUAL UZI SUB-MACHINE GUNS**

Grab the butcher's clothes and meat hook, drop your firearms, move outside the truck, and shut the doors using the green switch. Walk to the party entrance and, after a quick frisk, you'll be let in. As soon as you're inside, head for the nearby stairwell – use your map if you can't find it. Go up the stairs and note the Point of Interest (POI) on the map as well as the adjacent enemy. This guy is the Meat King's kiddie-killing brother. He moves back and forth from his kitchen to the room with the POI. Use your map or the keyhole to see when he moves to his kitchen on the left, then sneak through the doors and into the room with the POI. You'll find the client's daughter – dead, and strung up like salami. Grab the arm off

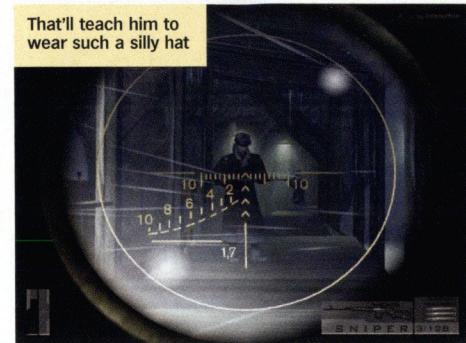
the ground to be used as evidence, resist the urge to kill the murderous brother, and make your way back downstairs.



Even cold-blooded killers need to rug-up in the snow

THE LOWDOWN**Get low to improve your aim**

One of the most powerful weapons in *Hitman: Contracts* is the sniper rifle. It allows you to take out targets from a safe distance. When you first use the rifle you'll notice the crosshair dances all over the screen. Crouch and it'll be much easier to aim.



door as soon as he enters and shoot him when he sits on the pot. Take Fuchs' clothes and exit the toilet. The guard outside will now escort you to the military base.

Once off the train, head to the transport ship. A guard standing out front will tell you how to find Commander Bjarkhov. Drop all your firearms at the top of the stairwell inside and move around to the walkway. You'll be frisked. Stride into the first door on the right to meet the commander. He'll go to pour some vodka. Move up behind him, wait for him to turn around and throw you a gesture, then equip your fibre wire and strangle him. Grab the gun and master key from his table. Move through the adjacent door in the room and you'll find yourself back in the ship's first hallway. Exit the ship.

Stroll to the warehouse near the submarine and grab the radioactive suit from the first stall on the right. Enter the sub and grab the three bombs. Walk back outside and, when the patrolling guard is not watching (avoid his gaze at all times), go down the ladder. Plant the bombs at the points highlighted on your map. Walk back up past the walkway and slide down into the icy area with the submarine tail sticking up. Wait for the guard near the front of the sub to be beside it, and detonate the bombs. Four guards should die. Sprint up and grab a uniform and weapon from the dead guard who's furthest away, before moseying back to the plane and entering it from the front.

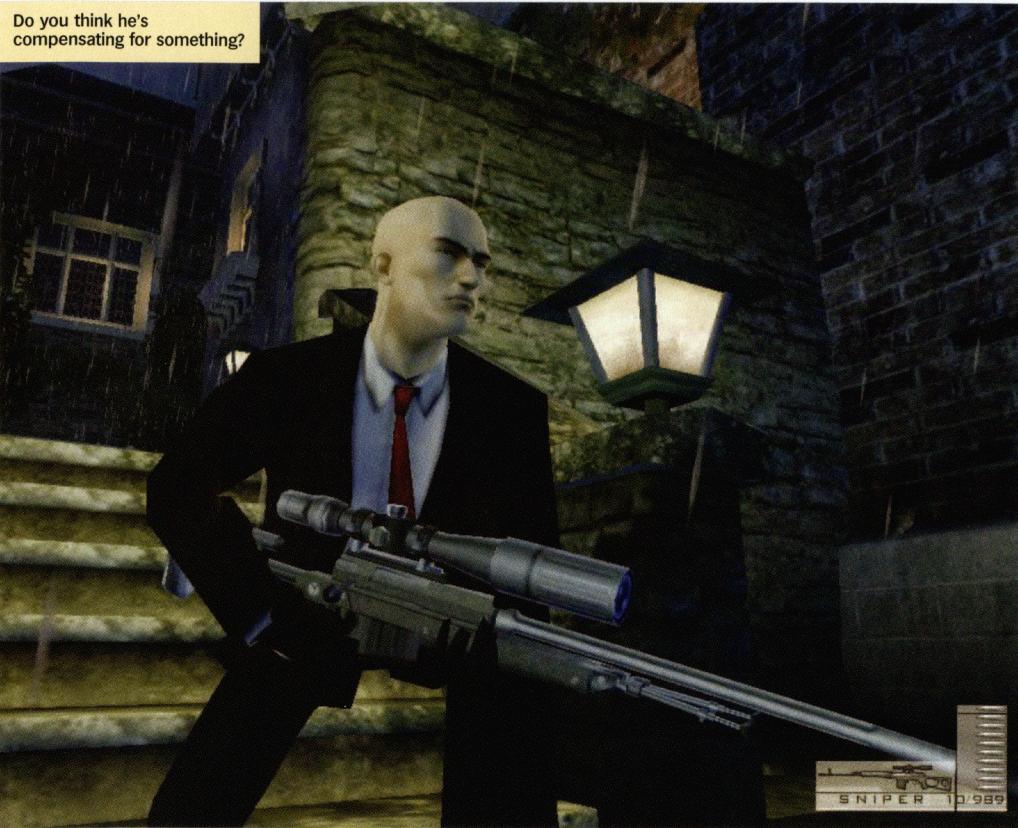
BELDINGFORD MANOR**SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD:
DUAL MAGNUM 500 PISTOLS**

Dodge the guards and make your way into the maze ahead. Move to the point of interest. It's a trap door. Go down into the basement and along the corridor until you come to a door. A patrolling guard is behind it. Wait for him to move south, then open the door and hit him with a syringe. Drag his body back into the corridor, grab his clothes, and move straight ahead into the wine cellar. Go through the door on the right, up the stairs, and then through another door to get into the Manor.

Take the double doors to your immediate left, the single door on your immediate left again, then patter into the kitchen. There'll be two guards here – don't get close to them. Go right, toward the power switch on your map. It's the manor's furnace. Turn it off, move back into the kitchen, and then up the stairs, passing the sexy shower maid as you go. When you get to the top of the stairs, grab the poison behind the second door on the right and head into the bathroom. The mirror hides a secret passage – enter it. Go up the stairs and save your game. It's vital you check your map here. The next bedroom



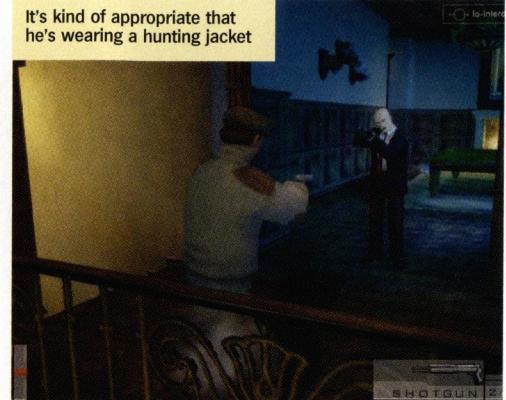
Do you think he's compensating for something?



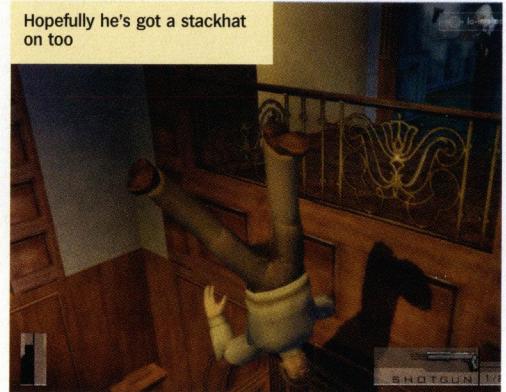
All handguns can be dual-wielded to double your pleasure



It's kind of appropriate that he's wearing a hunting jacket



Hopefully he's got a stackhat on too



belongs to your first target, Winston Beldingford. Sometimes he is asleep in his bed next to his maid, other times he's walking up and down through nearby rooms. If he's asleep, you'll have to sneak up to his bed and suffocate him with the nearby pillow. This is tough. If he goes walkabout, you can poison the milk next to his bed and hide behind the dressing panels when he returns.

After he has expired, move through the next pair of brown double doors. Turn to your immediate right and go through the secret passage hidden behind the bookcase. Climb the ladder. Keep going until you go down a tiny flight of stairs that lead to a spiral staircase. Go through the first door you come to. Soon you'll come to a doorway that leads into a hunter's bedroom. Make sure he is asleep before sneaking in and stealing his clothes and shotgun. Exit the double doors and move down to the billiard room. Go right when you get to the billiards, down the stairs, and into the main Manor entry foyer. Go through

the double doors next to the grandfather clock, then again, straight through the double doors ahead. Finally, go through the single door ahead, descend the spiral staircase, poison the whiskey, and hide in the opposite dark nook. This spike will dispatch Beldingford's son.

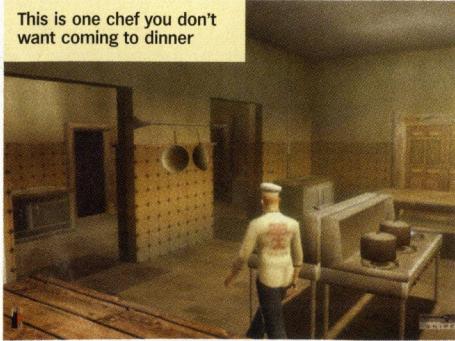
Return to the Manor entry foyer and move outside through the double doors. Move down the path on the right toward the power switch behind the second barn. When you get there, disrupt the TV transmission and head inside the barn, hiding behind the hay on your right. When the guards investigate, sneak past them, head through the large doors, then through the door on the right. Grab the stable key, exit the room, then proceed East through the next door. Move into the stable containing the white dot, making sure the stable boy isn't in the room at the time. Talk to the hostage and you'll set him free. Now all you have to do is avoid some guards and get back to the boat at the level's start.

CHANGE CLOTHES

Cook up the perfect disguise

Getting to your target without blowing your identity is going to be much harder if you're still wearing your standard suit. By knocking out any character you can change into their clothes and assume their identity. Don't dawdle though because no disguise is perfect.

This is one chef you don't want coming to dinner



RENDEZVOUS IN ROTTERDAM



SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD:
DUAL SAWN OFF SHOTGUNS

Quickly move down the stairs to the street. Break left and run round the block until you spot the photograph buyer dressed in black. Hit him with a syringe before taking his clothes and envelope, and dropping your guns. Walk to the gate ahead. You'll be let through then frisked. Enter the building to your left via the small flight of stairs. Find the bar and speak to the bartender. He'll give you a keycard and lead you to Rutgert Van Leuven – your first target. Save your game. When you're alone with Rutgert and he accesses his safe, choke him with your fibre wire. Be quick – he's armed. Grab the safe combination, open the safe and take the photos. Drag Rutgert's body through a couple of rooms until you find a sauna. Stash him there.

The buyer will soon wake from the syringe's effect so you'll need to change clothes. Move to the basement via the stairs you used to get to the second floor. You'll notice your second victim is in the room in the top left corner, while a POI (biker clothes) is in a room in the top right corner. Get the clothes first. Be aware that you should still try and minimise contact with enemies as this disguise

isn't as effective as your previous outfit. Kill the failed investigator then move up and outside.

You'll have to escape through the warehouse. You can move through an opening in the fence ahead, but make sure you dodge the view of the guards patrolling the alley. Get into the warehouse then, remaining undetected, get yourself to the exit point near the south door.

DEADLY CARGO



SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD:
SILENCED M4 CARBINE ASSAULT RIFLE

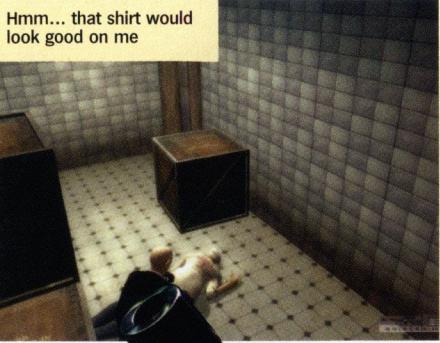
Sprint toward the power switch ahead until you get to the police station. It's best to save your game here as this next bit is the hardest part of the level. To your right is a gate that leads to the station. Whether you hit the power switch to distract the gate guard or not, your aim is to make it through the Police station door without being detected, then sneak into the room to the right. Police are coming and going through the front door all the time, so you'll have to be proficient with the map to get through. Also, remember to hold the sneak button down as soon as you get into the doorway. Once inside, wait for a chance to sneak to the POI. It's a police uniform.

Once you've got the uniform head through the garage, past the two mercenary guards, then into the small shed with the next POI. Change into the dockworker outfit,

HIDE THE EVIDENCE

It's time to get hands-on

It's hard to avoid leaving dead bodies lying around in Agent 47's line of work. These bodies can cause big trouble for you though because the instant a guard sees one he will raise the alarm, alerting all of the building's security. It doesn't have to be that way though, because standing over any unconscious body brings up the option to "Drag Body". Grab hold of the body and drag it into the shadows pronto and you'll be free to carry on with the mission.



dump your guns, and grab the toolbox. Just make sure no police see you exit the shed – they're the only ones allowed in the area. Move to the two guards and allow them to frisk you. After you're past them, keep clear of any other guards and move to the manhole ahead. Once down in the sewers move to the middle manhole on your map. Climb three quarters of the way up the ladder, and when the patrolling guard moves through the nearby door, spring up the final rungs and up the adjacent stairs.

There's a guard uniform up here – change into it. Now move back the way you came to the first manhole you entered. Board the ship, making sure you don't dawdle in front of any guards, and go right. Find Boris on your map and follow him around.

When he moves into his secluded second floor room, kill him with the fibre wire. Now, move back to the shed where you left the police uniform and, making sure no patrolling police see you, put the uniform back on. Proceed to the exit.

TRADITIONS OF THE TRADE

SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD: DUAL SILENCED SG220 PISTOLS

Drop your briefcase and guns, and pick up the ID card. Walk into the hotel and go down the corridor to your left. You'll come to a locked door. When the patrolling guard moves away, pick it. The upcoming corridor is home to a ghost. Move to the door the ghost lingered out front of and pick the lock. Check the keyhole to make sure the occupant is in the shower before creeping in and grabbing the security uniform.

Cruise around the corridor and up some stairs. You're headed for room 203. It'll be locked when you get there. Wait for the patrolling guard ahead to move past you before picking it, then move inside and onto the balcony. When the guard from the room next door moves inside, jump balconies, sneak in to the room after him, and stab



him with your syringe. Save your game. Sneak into the shower to fibre wire the fat old Fuchs. Grab the briefcase from by the bed and the keys from off the table. Jump balconies again and make your way back to the hotel's main foyer entrance. When the patrolling guard isn't looking, pick the door to the left of the main stairway. Move around into the steam room where the other Fuchs is and turn the valve. After he's dead, move into the steam room and grab the pass from his boiled corpse.

Now you just need to recover the bomb. Go up the main stairs, make a left through the metal detector, then up another flight of stairs. When you go through the metal detectors they'll go off on account of your briefcase, but as you're a security guard, if you keep walking without breaking stride you'll be fine. Go left after the next metal detector and go through the door with the green light above it. Jog around until you spot two open windows. Be cautious here, as the guard inside will shoot you on sight. When he moves away from you, enter the left window and sneak through the double doors. Check your map, you're almost at the POI (the bomb). Sneak past the

SLAYING A DRAGON

SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD: SILENCED MP5 SUB-MACHINEGUN

This mission is drop-dead simple. Walk to the second manhole to your right with the POI, descend the ladder, and grab the rat poison. Go across to the top floor of the apartment building on the other side of the map, pick open the locked door and don the gardener's uniform before dropping all your guns. Walk into the park and note the tea on the ledge near your target. When he moves way from the tea, creep up to it and drop in some rat poison. Leave the park, wait for the target to be confirmed dead, and head for the exit.

THE WANG FOU INCIDENT

SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD: SILENCED AK-74 RIFLE

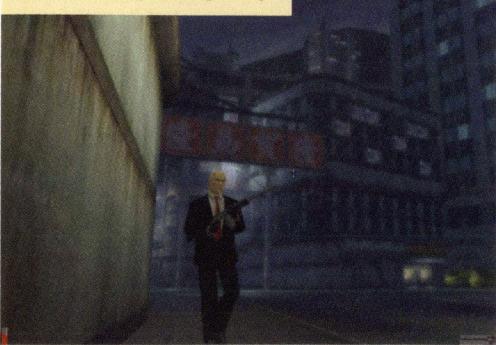
Run to the ladder on the map. Sneak along the balcony, pick the locked door, and enter the room. Inside are a car bomb, detonator, Red Dragon outfit, and sniper rifle. Grab the bomb and detonator for now. Creep down to the street, find the nearby manhole, and hide behind an adjacent dumpster. When the limo driver comes to take a leak, stab him with your syringe. Take his clothes and drag his body into the sewer. Stroll out to the driver's side of the limo and plant the bomb. Move into the alley and change back



WANT EVEN MORE HITMAN?
Even though *Hitman: Contracts* is only a few months old, those clever people at Eidos have already begun work on *Hitman 4*.

guard in the next room, put the bomb in the case, and escape the same way you got in. Exit the hotel with the bomb to complete this rather tricky little mission. Give yourself a pat on the back.

A good example of how not to play. Grab a disguise dingleberry



It's good to see Agent 47's not afraid of a bit of cross-dressing



into whatever clothes you had on before. Now, scurry down to the two Blue Lotus guards. The negotiator should be leaving in his car. Equip the detonator and blow the bomb as the car passes the guards – you should have killed four guards and the negotiator. Save here.

Now head back up to the room where you got the bomb and grab the sniper rifle and Red Dragon outfit. Move through the next door, avoiding the guards as best you can, and head into the large square room. As soon as you enter it, you should be able to spot a round room on the floor below you to your immediate left. Your final two targets are in here. When the nearby patrolling Red Dragon guard moves away, zoom in with your sniper rifle and take both targets out. You may not be able to shoot them in the head, but the rifle is so powerful, it shouldn't matter. It's even possible to kill them both with one bullet if they're standing in line. After this, drop the rifle and head back the way you came to the exit point.

THE SEAFOOD MASSACRE



SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD:
DUAL GK 17 PISTOLS

Hustle around the corner to the ladder. The Red Dragon negotiator will soon start walking down this street. When no one is looking, climb the ladder, move a few metres and equip the sniper rifle. When the negotiator starts taking a leak, and no one else is around, cap him in the head. Hopefully he'll fall down into the sewer. Pack your rifle back into its case and stroll over to the dead body. Drag him into the sewer if he isn't there already, change into his clothes, and grab the amulet.

While still carrying your case, run to the other ladder on the other side of the block. When no one is looking, climb the ladder as high as you can go. Save your game. Use the flapping sheet on your right as cover, get out your rifle, and take out the chief and the Blue Lotus negotiator on the second floor of the restaurant. You can wait for them to be in line and take them out with one shot, or quickly take out the second target as he flees. Drop your guns, and when no one is watching, get to street level.

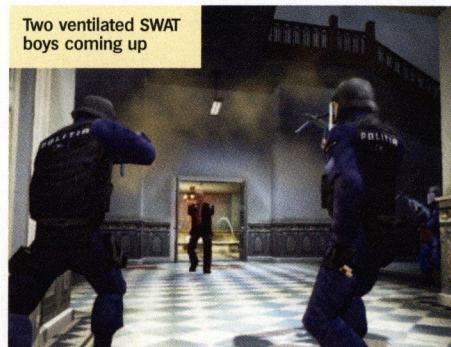
Enter the restaurant, go upstairs, and place the amulet on the table. Now get to an exit.

NO RAMBO ANTICS

Avoid big gunfights

When you see a couple of armed guards around the corner it's tempting to pull out your own machine gun and serve them up a meal of hot lead. This sort of tactic should be avoided at all costs because it will ruin your chances of a Silent Assassin rating.

Two ventilated SWAT boys coming up



LEE HONG ASSASSINATION

SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD: DUAL SILENCED MICRO UZIS

Take the main entrance into the restaurant. Move through the door on the left towards the POI and talk to the bartender. Get the invite he leaves and, when no one is looking, grab the laxatives off the shelf. Move back to the round room and approach the two guards near the door with the dark red lantern. One will lead you to the brothel.

The madam will introduce you to Mei Ling. When you get in the room with Mei Ling, pistol-whip her and grab the safe combination. Save. Creep out onto the balcony and around to the brothel's entrance, jumping the gap as you go. Sneak past the guards and over the bridge, keeping to the right. Move in this door and hide behind the crates. A guard will be on your left, but he's easy to sneak past. The tough challenge is the guard who patrols downstairs. Use your map or just watch the screen carefully. When the guard downstairs goes outside, sneak down to the first floor and then down the stairs ahead that lead to the basement. You'll soon come to a room with a chef. Sneak past him through the doorway ahead. Hang a left and ignore the guard uniform, instead putting on the spare chef uniform under the curtain. Stride through the basement until you see a doorway with two guards, then duck into the door on your right to find the weapons deposit. Move through the door behind the curtain to find a secret passageway not on your map. Keep running along until you come to a closed door on your left. Go through it and check your map. A prisoner is in the room next door. Sneak past the guard in the hallway and duck into the room. Talk to the prisoner and he'll inform you of where the Jade figurine is located. Each time you play, the game randomly assigns the location of the figurine to one of four possible safe locations.

BASEMENT WEAPONS DEPOSIT

This is the most convenient alternative. Go back to the weapons deposit room which you passed through and take the other door to find the safe.

BROTHEL SAFE

If it turns out to be in the brothel, sneak back the way you came, avoiding all guards. The safe is in the room to the right after you make the balcony jump.

GUARD'S QUARTERS SAFE

This is located in the room that contained the car bomb that you used back in the Wang Fou Incident mission. Walk down the street, climb the ladder, pick the door's lock, and it's yours!

MANSION 2ND FLOOR SAFE

You'll need a Red Dragon uniform to access this safe. We suggest going for the Red Dragon guard who patrols the restaurant basement stairway. Sneak outside and crouch to the side of the doorway that leads into the storage area of the restaurant. Save your game. Ambush him with a syringe as soon as he gets to the bottom of the stairs. Once you've got the uniform, head back down to the basement and move to the far north elevator. The guards shouldn't give you any grief if you're wearing the uniform. Enter the mansion and move to the western stairwell to get to the second floor. There's a patrolling guard here. Make sure he doesn't see you open the safe and grab the figurine.

Find the chef uniform, put it on, and get to the kitchen. The two chefs there will ask you to deliver some soup to Hong. When you get in front of the dish, add the laxative. The other chefs don't seem to notice. Now, deliver the soup to Lee Hong. Zun, his grunt, will taste it first, causing him to rush to the loo. Fibre wire Lee Hong and hide his body opposite Zun's seat on the other side of the table. Get to an exit point.

HUNTER AND HUNTED

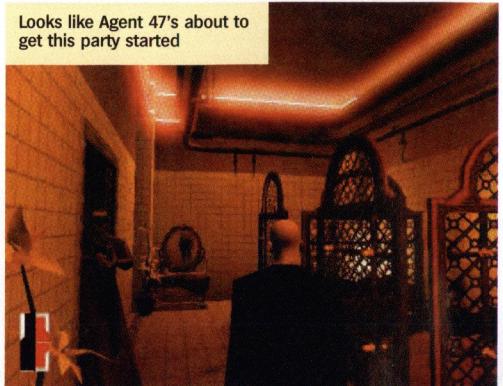
SILENT ASSASSIN AWARD: SILENCED PGM SNIPER RIFLE

As soon as the level starts run out the door to your left and, moving straight ahead, take the first door on your right. Jump the balcony, make a hard left, move all the way down to the railing, and jump back into the unit block. Head out the door, make a hard right, and hit the power switch. You'll see a bunch of SWAT in the hallway ahead, run toward them (they can't see you) and drop down the open lift shaft on your left. Open the doors, and go left around the corner. You'll see a cop ahead. Slowly sneak up behind him and stab him with your syringe. Drag his body through the door on your right, and grab his clothes. Continue on to the end of the hallway and you'll eventually get out onto the street.

Make a left when you can. Your disguise isn't great when brushing shoulders with other police, so don't bump into them or dawdle. Move around to the manhole, drop into the sewer, and climb back up the Southernmost ladder on the map. You'll emerge in an enclosed area surrounded with wood. Ahead you'll be able to spot a black car. Save your game. Go into first-person view, move into the corner of the wooden area, equip your silenced pistol, and without any police being able to spot you, fire a shot at the car. Its alarm will go off. As the SWAT investigate, move out of the wooden area, make a right, and follow the alley around until you're right behind your target. As soon as you can see his head, give him a silenced headshot. Now go back down the manhole.

This time emerge from the hole to the North. Move North again, then make a couple of right turns. There'll be a dumpster and some police between you and the exit point. Save your game. Sneak up to the dumpster, as slow as you can, then as you're about to pass it, break into a sprint and burst through the gap to the exit point.

Looks like Agent 47's about to get this party started



START YOUR ENGINES!

F1
RACING



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ps2 Xword

Quite comfy on your chair and don't feel like going outside for a while? Good, then try this cunning crossword for size. If you get stuck or if you're just plain stupid you can flip to page 13 for the answers. But doing that counts as quitting, and only losers quit!

↓ DOWN

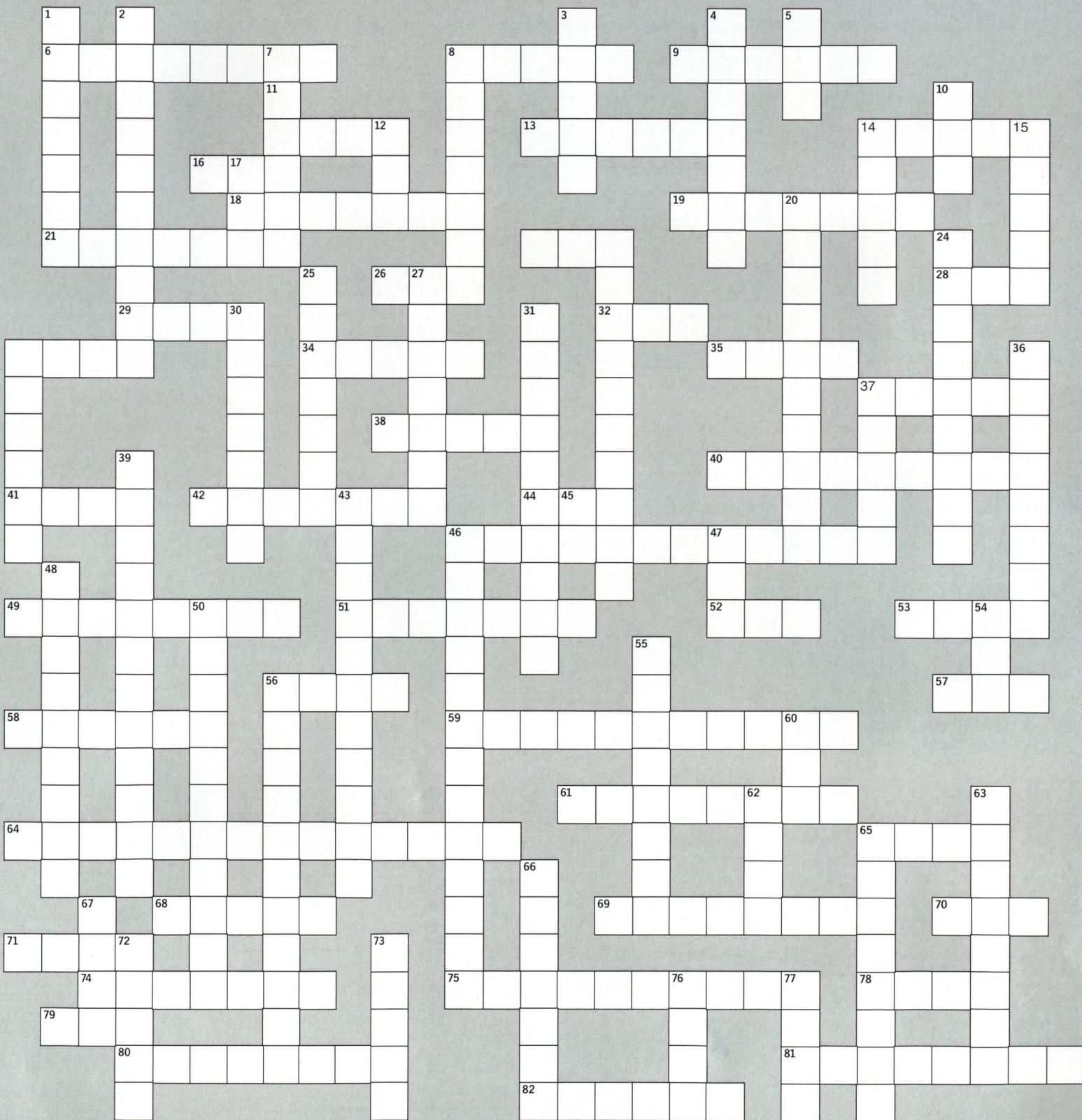
1. A 3D shape used to make PS2 graphics (7)
2. Turn this on and you'll be dead (4, 6)
3. Loves eating snake (5)
4. Best OPS2 writer and dead-set legend, who also wrote these clues (7)
5. Often overlooked artistic platform adventure (3)
7. Jet Li fights with this (6)
8. Car game: _____ Metal Black (7)
10. This cop's always a pain (3)
12. He has a chainsaw grafted onto his arm (3)
14. Something you might feel the need for (5)
15. The PS2's most popular online game (5)
17. Strategy game: _____ of Empires 2 (3)
20. Racing star whose games are doing better than his career (5, 5)
23. Stars in two separate fighting games (10)
24. A marsupial that evolved into a man called Jak (9)
25. The PS2 wouldn't be happy without this: _____ Engine (7)
27. The company that released this game Prince of Persia: Sands of Time (7)
30. The shooter XIII and Van Damme came from which country? (7)
31. It's raining red (10)
33. Limbless videogame character (6)

→ ACROSS

36. PSP stands for PlayStation _____ (8)
37. Something you do a lot of in driving games (5)
39. Don't wave goodbye to this unleashed sport (12)
43. Something most sequels lack (11)
45. If someone buys an Xbox they are ... idiot (2)
46. A shooter with a lot of Radical time travelling (13)
47. A musical shooter (3)
48. Japanese name for Resident Evil (9)
50. You might see these in a mirror or on the Stuntman box (11)
54. New multimedia version of PS2 (3)
55. Father of PlayStation: Ken _____ (8)
56. Fictional German castle (11)
60. PS... (3)
62. Another word for fight (4)
63. An evil corporation (8)
65. John Carpenter movie and PS2 game (3, 5)
66. Voiced a videogame Bounty Hunter: Henry _____ (7)
67. Someone who gets upset by trash talk is a cry _____ (4)
72. Colour-based puzzle game: Worms _____ (5)
73. Classic videogame console: _____ 2600 (5)
76. You might see a black one of these in space (4)
77. The Driv3r game is running _____ (4)

37. The name of the tank in Grand Theft Auto 3 (5)
38. A flurry of attacks (5)
40. Busty archaeologist (4, 5)
41. The only female tennis star to have her own PS2 game (first name) (4)
42. Doing this in your car would leave a lot of smoke (7)
44. A rodent who sells you out to the enemy (3)
46. Shape-shifting robots (12)
49. Enemies become this when you juggle them with a combo (8)
51. Nazis came from here (7)
52. Maximo faced an army of them (3)
53. A hard car to dodge (5)
56. X-Men character Storm controls this element (4)
57. Soul Calibur character Astaroth uses this (3)
58. Smash these to find power-ups (6)
59. The thing you play games on (11)
61. Flash car and brief love interest for the coolest videogame character ever (8)
64. The Simpsons: Hit & Run was heavily inspired by this (5, 5, 4)
65. Developer of Sega Superstars and Puyo Pop Fever - Sonic _____ (4)

68. Flying ostrich game on Midway's Arcade Treasures (5)
69. Extreme sports game 'inspired by' Back to the Future II (8)
70. Devils might just do this (3)
71. Something you might do with a dagger (4)
74. You'll get one of these if you play videogames all day (7)
75. Town living in the shadow of Resident Evil (6, 4)
78. Something medkits do (4)
79. Crazy-haired heroine from Atari platformer (3)
80. Small piece of wood or a terrorist group (8)
81. Known simply as the Birdman (4, 4)
82. Always seen after a successful game (6)



CODE-U-LIKE

Need to cheat your way to victory on a certain game? Here are the codes you should use.

DRIV3R

(SLES TBC)



Driv3r is a fantastic adventure but it's also harder to crack than diamond-plated titanium. To help you get through Driv3r's missions without too much heartache, we've collected the following cheats.

Unlock all weapons

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Invincibility (not in Story Mode)

0, 0, 1, 1, 2, 2, 3, 3

Unlock all missions

1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4

Unlock all vehicles

1, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU

(SLES 52011)



Tak is a great guy and a hell of a game but if you want to get a little more out of the game why not try these cool codes. Enter the codes during gameplay (while paused), then go to the Extras Menu to activate them.

Unlock everything

←, →, 0, 0, 0, 0, ←, →

Unlock all plants

0, 0, 0, 0, ←, ↑, →, ↓, ↓

100 feathers

0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0

All moonstones

0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, ←, →

All Juju power-ups

↑, →, ←, ↓, 0, 0, 0, 0, ↓

All Yorbels

↑, 0, ←, 0, →, 0, ↓, 0, ↑

HITMAN: CONTRACTS

(SLES 52132)



Agent 47's latest missions giving you grief? If there's a stage you absolutely can't get past, try entering this code during gameplay. It'll make you complete the current mission with a 'Silent Assassin' rating:

0, 1, 2, ↑, ↓, X, L3, 0, X, 0, 0, X

Alternatively, to activate a complete level select, enabling you to jump to any level, tap in this code during gameplay:

0, 0, 0, 0, ←, ↑, →, 1, 2, 1

FIGHT NIGHT 2004

(SLES 52374)

The best boxing game since Rocky, and no doubt the start of another very successful EA Sports franchise. There's a bunch of bonus boxers that you can unlock by playing through the game properly, but there's also a number of codes that will open up some fun extras.

For example, to unlock the bonus fighter Big Tigger, go to the Main Menu, select My Corner, then Record Book, then Most Wins Boxer, then press Up twice.

If you need to unlock all the game's venues, go to the main menu and press:

←, ←, ←, →, →, →, ←, →, →

And to give all the boxers big heads (a classic videogame bonus!), just tap in these directions on the main menu:

←, →, ←, →, ←, →, ←

TRANSFORMERS

(SLES 52388)

This game allowed us to finally pack away our collection of Transformers toys, after playing with them every day for the last 20 years. Now we've finally conquered the game, it's time to start playing with it, so we've got hold of some fun codes to spice things up a bit. These codes need to be entered while you're at Autobot HQ, on the 'Difficulty Select' screen:

For Turbo mode:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0, 1

For infinite Powerlink:

↑, ↓, ↑, ↓, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0

For infinite Stealth (when you have the Convert Minicon equipped):

↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2

For all Minicons:

0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0, 0

To complete the Alaska level:

1, 0, 1, 1, 0, 0, ←, ←, →, ←

To complete the Deep Amazon level:

←, →, ←, ←, →, 1, 2, Circle

To complete the Earth level:

0, 2, 1, 1, 1, 2, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0

To complete the Mid-Atlantic level:

0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0

To complete the Starship level:

←, ←, →, 0, 0, →, →, ←

To power-up your shots, pause the game when playing and tap this code in. You'll need to do it again in each new level:

0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0

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CHEATS
PRESS 2

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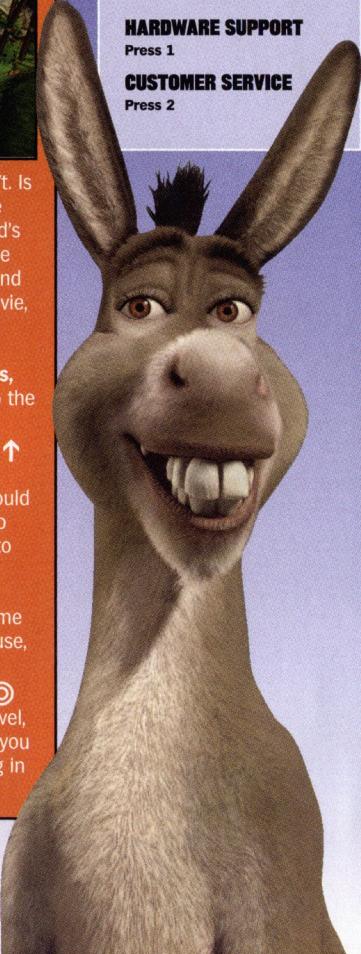
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CUSTOMER SERVICE
Press 2



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PIN	GAME	CHEAT
12271	Tomb Raider Angel of Darkness	Level Skip
00061	Drakan	Invincibility
00062	Drakan	Increase Character
00063	Drakan	Increase Spells
00064	Drakan	Health
00065	Drakan	Money
02881	Stuntman	All Cars
02882	Stuntman	All Toys
02883	Stuntman	All Filmography
13474	Die Hard Vendetta	Big Heads
13475	Die Hard Vendetta	Small Heads
13473	Die Hard Vendetta	Liquid Metal Textures
13472	Die Hard Vendetta	Flame On
13471	Die Hard Vendetta	Invincibility
13476	Die Hard Vendetta	Exploding Flists
20342	Cat in the Hat	Extra Life
20341	Cat in the Hat	All Levels
20343	Cat in the Hat	Bonus Door Keys
11352	Primal	Easy Kill
07671	V8 Supercars Race Driver	Better Damage
07671	V8 Supercars Race Driver	Realistic Handling
09871	The Scorpion King	Master Code
09872	The Scorpion King	Full Health and Weapons
15681	Bad Boys II	Unlock Everything
00321	Theme Park World	All Purchases Free
00322	Theme Park World	Golden Tickets
00323	Theme Park World	All Items Researched
12301	Minority Report	Invincibility
12302	Minority Report	All Weapons
12303	Minority Report	Infinite Ammo
04351	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	All Cheats
06845	Medal of Honour Frontline	Photon Torpedoes
06844	Medal of Honour Frontline	Gold Medal for Current Mission
06843	Medal of Honour Frontline	1 Shot Kills
06842	Medal of Honour Frontline	Unlimited Ammo
06841	Medal of Honour Frontline	Invincibility
06848	Medal of Honour Frontline	Snipe-A-Rama
06846	Medal of Honour Frontline	Bullet Shield Mode
06847	Medal of Honour Frontline	Perfectionist
04124	Turok Evolution	Ammo
04122	Turok Evolution	Weapons
04125	Turok Evolution	Invincibility
04121	Turok Evolution	Invincibility
04123	Turok Evolution	Level Sklp
15088	The Hulk	Half Enemies HP
15081	The Hulk	Play as Grey Hulk
15083	The Hulk	Level Select
15087	The Hulk	Double Health for Hulk
15084	The Hulk	Regenerator
15082	The Hulk	Invincibility
15085	The Hulk	Unlimited Continues
15086	The Hulk	Double Health for Enemies
14262	The Getaway	Armoured Car Weapon
14261	The Getaway	Double Health
12202	Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	Unlock all Technorangs
12201	Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	Show All Items
09872	The Scorpion King	Full Health and Weapons
09871	The Scorpion King	Master Code
10171	Scooby-Doo! Night of 100 Frights	All Power-Ups
10172	Scooby-Doo! Night of 100 Frights	All Warp Gates
10173	Scooby-Doo! Night of 100 Frights	All FMV Sequences
06791	TENCHU 3 Wrath of Heaven	All Characters
06792	TENCHU 3 Wrath of Heaven	All Missions
06793	TENCHU 3 Wrath of Heaven	Unlock all Items
09021	Conflict Desert Storm	Cheat Menu
10542	Midnight Club II	All Cars
10543	Midnight Club II	Unlock All
08123	Spider-Man	All Fighting Controls
08122	Spider-Man	Unlimited Webbing
08121	Spider-Man	Master Code
08125	Spider-Man	Matrix Style attacks
08314	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 4
08313	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 3
08311	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 1
08315	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 5
08312	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 2
14744	BloodRayne	Level Select
14745	BloodRayne	Enemy Freeze
14746	BloodRayne	Show Weapons
14747	BloodRayne	Gratuitous Dismemberment
14748	BloodRayne	Juggy
14742	BloodRayne	Fill Bloodlust
14741	BloodRayne	God Mode
14743	BloodRayne	Time Factor
11334	Red Faction 2	Unlock All Cheats
11332	Red Faction 2	Unlimited Ammo
11333	Red Faction 2	Gibby Explosions
11331	Red Faction 2	Super Health
12005	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Levels
12001	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Tricks
12002	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Surfers
12003	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Suits
12004	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Boards
04541	SSX Tricky	Unlock Everything
18972	Simpsons Hit & Run	Infinite Car Health
18973	Simpsons Hit & Run	Faster Cars
18971	Simpsons Hit & Run	All Reward Cars
18975	Simpsons Hit & Run	Blow up Vehicles in One Hit
18974	Simpsons Hit & Run	Jumping Car
18976	Simpsons Hit & Run	Night Time Mode

gamestation

Your definitive guide to the ever-expanding library of PlayStation 2 games

So you've just bought a PlayStation 2, and you're immediately confronted by a dauntingly huge line-up of games to choose from at your local gaming store. Now what?

GameStation is OPS2's one-stop guide to getting an idea of what's hot and what's not. As time goes on and new games come out, we drop some of the older games that don't warrant being remembered, replacing them with newer games that score well in the reviews section.

As PlayStation 2 owners we really are spoilt for choice. There is a massive choice of AAA quality games – many of which are bound to fall under your radar. OPS2 is here to make sure that not too many of them manage to slip through your fingers.

If you just want to find the best of the best, look for the games that receive a Bronze, Silver or Gold award. Enjoy your search!

GLOSSARY

Just got your PS2? It's your first console ever and you've bought the best magazine to give the lastest and most up-to-date information but don't have a clue what we're going on about? Well, without wanting to patronise those gamers who've been around since the Atari 2600 by spelling out the meaning of gaming terms and acronyms in the reviews and previews, here's your 'at a glance' guide to all things PS2 and technical.

Affterburn: An extra kick of power in flight sims.

AI: Artificial Intelligence.

Analogue: Re: Dual Shock 2. Registering degrees of input, as opposed to digital's on/off status.

Boarders: Snowboarders or games featuring the alpine sport.

Coin-op: Coin-operated arcade videogames.

Cut-scene: Explanatory, non-playable scene in videogame (also 'FMV').

CPU: Central Processor Unit. Brains of PS2.

Dev kits: Programmable PS2s used by developers.

D-pad: Direction pad on PS2 controller.

Dual Shock controller: Controller for PSone.

Dual Shock 2: Controller designed for PS2 (with analogue).

ECTS: European Computer Trade Show.

E3: Electronic Entertainment Expo (US).

Frame rate: Number of images drawn per second in games. Higher frame rate = smoother animation.

FPS: First-Person Shooter (eg Quake III).

Hack 'n' slash: Refers to game (usually fantasy) featuring blade combat.

High res: High resolution (graphics).

HUD: Head Up Display.

Screen furniture such as map, speedometer, etc.

Iconography: Graphical shorthand defining game, genre etc.

Low res: Refers to poor quality graphics.

L3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's left joystick.

Mini-games: Bonus, playable games found in larger titles.

Polygon: Building block of videogame graphics.

PSone: The precursor to PS2. If you don't know what this is then frankly there's no hope for you.

Real-time: When one second of game time equals one second in the real world.

RPG: Role-playing game.

RTS: Real-time strategy.

R3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's right joystick.

Sim: Simulation.

Strafe: Move sideways while looking straight.

USB: Port to connect peripherals such as a keyboard to PS2.

**If there's a term, word or phrase that's still taxing your brain cells, let us know and we'll include it here.*

.HACK – VOL 1: INFECTION	
An addictive new spin on the RPG genre that takes it into new territory.	★ OVERALL 08
007 NIGHTFIRE	
Aside from the occasionally iffy AI, this has enough variety to make a solid single player game, and the multiplayer gives it longevity.	★ OVERALL 08
18 WHEELER	
Brash, chunky and colourful truck racer. Unfortunately it just doesn't offer enough substance to satisfy the hardened gamer.	OVERALL 06
2002 FIFA WORLD CUP	
The World Cup version of FIFA 2002 with more pizzazz, nifty effects for star players and a serious challenge at the highest difficulty level, but sadly lacking in game modes.	OVERALL 07
ACE COMBAT: DISTANT THUNDER	
Best Ace Combat yet. A graphically-polished flight sim with a variety of missions. Best with a flight-stick of some kind.	OVERALL 07
AFL LIVE PREMIERSHIP EDITION	
Plays a better game of footy, but it's not a vast improvement over its predecessor.	OVERALL 06
AGGRESSIVE INLINE	
There's more than enough inline action to keep you impressed and entertained until the next <i>Tony Hawk</i> says, "Buy me, dude!"	★ OVERALL 08
AIRBLADE	
Intricate visuals, sublime handling, massive airs – everything you could want hoverboarding to be. Back to the Future anyone?	★ OVERALL 08
ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002	
An enjoyable all-round game of baseball with oodles of depth, and surprisingly compelling to watch as well as to play.	OVERALL 07
AMPLITUDE	
An addictive mixture of reflexes and music timing. Weak graphics but great gameplay.	★ OVERALL 08
AQUA AQUA: WETRIX 2.0	
Addictive, well-realised update of the N64 puzzler Wetrix. Essentially it's <i>Tris</i> with water. Weird, but worthwhile.	OVERALL 07
ARC THE LAD: TWILIGHT OF THE SPIRITS	
It isn't original but <i>Arc the Lad</i> is a welcome addition to the list of next-generation RPGs.	OVERALL 07
ARMORED CORE 2	
Infinitely-tweakable first-person mech shooter. Not for the casual gamer after a quick fix, but perfect for those who love their sims.	OVERALL 07
ARMY MEN AIR ATTACK: BLADE'S REVENGE	
Very dull helicopter game. Hardly surprising from arguably the worst series of games to grace a console.	OVERALL 02
ARMY MEN: GREEN ROGUE	
On-rail shooter that manages to sink to new depths of soldering tedium. Avoid at all costs.	OVERALL 01
ATV OFFROAD FURY 2	
More of the same, with new tracks, riders, racing modes and plenty of good old fashioned fun.	★ OVERALL 08
AUTO MODELLISTA	
The love-child of cel-shaded graphics and <i>Gran Turismo</i> . Despite its cartoonish appearance, this is a fairly serious racing game.	★ OVERALL 08
BACKYARD WRESTLING: DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME	
When they titled this brawler <i>Don't Try This At Home</i> – did they mean the game?	OVERALL 06
BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE II	
Worthwhile if you're after a hack 'n' slash with D&D style, but the game shows its age worse than Cher.	OVERALL 07

YOUR KEY TO SHORTLIST

GOLD

Only for games that scored the elusive 10/10.

SILVER

Awarded to games with a mighty 9/10.

BRONZE

Given to games that scored an impressive 8/10.

BEYOND GOOD & EVIL

Compelling and original. It manages to cross multiple genres and is bizarre, unique and engaging all at once.

BLOODRAYNE

BloodRayne is an explosion of sex, action and violence. It's not going to tax your mind but it's so much fun you won't care.

BOMBERMAN KART

As much fun as four people can have with fifty bucks. It's worth it just for the original 2D *Bomberman*.

BUFFY 2: CHAOS BLEEDS

Full of action and adventure, *Chaos Bleeds* is a worthy addition to the *Buffy* legacy.

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT

An even more intense racing experience than its predecessor. *The Fast & the Furious* in a video game.

CASTLEVANIA: LAMENT OF INNOCENCE

Better whip and dungeon action than Larry Wachowski's last all-nighter at the Hellfire Club.

CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH

While it doesn't reinvent the *Baldur's Gate* wheel, it does refine it so that even RPG haters will be charmed.

CLUB FOOTBALL

The second best soccer game on PS2. Superior to the *FIFA* games but *PES* still gives it a thrashing.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 4

One for experts and newbies alike, *Colin 4* is a superlative rally sim with a tank full of fun.

CONFlict DESERT STORM II

It's not perfect but it improves on its predecessor by a long shot. War may be hell but this certainly isn't.

CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER

A frantic trip down memory lane for old school veterans, but *Contra* may confuse or confound the contemporary gamer.

CRASH NITRO KART

With a little spit and polish, *CNK* could have been in pole position, but its faults leave it lagging behind.

CRAZY TAXI

Arcade thrills aplenty in this no-holds-barred city-smashing racer.

If you want speed, buy this now.

CRICKET 2004

Howzat? Not outstanding. Comes close to being great, but falls short due to the inherited flaws of *Cricket 2002*.

DANCE UK

Great songs (Junior Senior, Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Run DMC), excellent add-ons (non-slip mat, karaoke headseat) and great value. Well worth a buck – and it'll get you back in shape!

DANCING STAGE MEGAMIX

Top sweaty disco fun, marred by a flimsy selection of songs. All together now – big fish, little fish, cardboard box.

DARK CHRONICLE

If you've finished *FFX* and need a new fix, look no further. This is top-tier RPG fare, an essential purchase.

DEF JAM VENDETTA

Some more options would have made this a true champion, but it's still a worthy contender. *SmackDown* watch out!

DEUS EX

The thinking man's action shooter and genre-busting game that redefines expectations. Superb.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE

PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE

PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 07

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE

PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 08

SILVER

PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 08

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PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 08

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BRONZE

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★ OVERALL 06

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★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE

PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 07

OVERALL 07

BRONZE

PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 07

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER

PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE

PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 09

SILVER

PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 09

**DEVIL MAY CRY**

Melding battling with lush surroundings and a superb gothic atmosphere. One of the best PS2 games yet? Definitely.

DEVIL MAY CRY 2

Die-hards may cry at the new direction, but there's still enough gorgeous style and firearms in DMC2 to satisfy action junkies.

DISNEY'S EXTREME SKATE ADVENTURE

Just as fun as any other skater out there, just skewed toward the youngsters.

DISNEY'S THE HAUNTED MANSION

Aimed at younger audiences, so it's neither terribly complicated or difficult, but when all's said and done it's simple and addictive. Well-rounded and worth a few hours of exploration.

DOWNHILL DOMINATION

Downhill Domination is a fine extreme racer that should appeal to all daredevil freaks.

DRAKENGARD

An action-RPG featuring dragon-based shooting sections and beat-'em-up swordplay. Repetitive and simplistic gameplay make this little more than a brawler, but it is addictive appealing.

DROPSHIP: UNITED PEACE FORCE

Impressive combat sim that rewards commitment with paced and varied gameplay.

DYNASTY TACTICS 2

Dynasty Tactics 2 is purely one for the more masochistic strategy gurus. You know who you are.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 4: XTREME LEGENDS

Dynasty Warriors 4: Xtreme Legends is strictly one for the beat-'em-up fans. Just don't call it mindless.

ENDGAME

Sets a new standard in the lightgun shooter genre: Innovative, refreshing and most of all, a tonne of fun.

ENTER THE MATRIX

Despite a painful lack of depth ETM is an enjoyable package for anyone after another dose of Matrix mayhem.

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND

Adventure that includes smart visuals, witty script and intelligent puzzles.

ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT

Other hockey sims on the market with better gameplay put this in the sin bin.

ESPN NBA BASKETBALL

ESPN NBA Basketball slam dunks the competition with its slick presentation and innovative modes.

ESPN NFL FOOTBALL

If this game's quality was put into a local game, the results would be incredible. Until then, go for the stars and stripes.

ESPN NHL HOCKEY

A fast flowing game with plenty of depth. A no-brainer for hockey fans but a still a solid game for everyone else.

EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES

EverQuest Online Adventures offers rewards for the persistent, but it can be a pretty tough slog getting there.

EVIL TWIN

Adventure from the dark side of platforming. Average, so-so animation with 76 levels of twisted plot.

EXTERMINATION

Alien-inspired survival horror-fest that is set in a deserted Antarctic research base. Positively crawling with cool design innovations.

EXTREME-G 3

A neon beast of a future bike racer that requires skill and brains. Takes some inspiration from the Wipeout series.

EYE TOY: PLAY

Forget the fact that it's marketed at casual gamers; give it a try, because when it comes to Eye Toy, seeing is believing.

EYE TOY: GROOVE

Groove is a victim of the diversity of its predecessor. The lack of variety offered by this dancing title undoubtedly narrows its appeal.

F1 CAREER CHALLENGE

At last, an F1 game that makes a priority of excitement and thrills over worthy but dull simulation.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2
★★★★★

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2
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FIFA FOOTBALL 2004**OVERALL 07**

The best FIFA yet but it's miles behind PES3. It has all the bells and whistles, but the gameplay is still lacking.

FIGHT NIGHT 2004**OVERALL 08**

If Fight Night 2004 were a boxer, it would quite rightly quip, "I am the greatest!"

FINAL FANTASY X**OVERALL 09**

Nothing else needs to be said about this brilliant RPG. A classic Square adventure with next-gen presentation and production.

FINAL FANTASY X-2**OVERALL 09**

FFX-2 is a huge, sprawling RPG adventure that is well worth the attention of even the most casual fan.

FORBIDDEN SIREN**OVERALL 08**

This game belongs on the shelf of every survival horror buff. Hell – it belongs on every gamer's shelf.

FREEDOM FIGHTERS**OVERALL 09**

Slight imperfections are swamped by an utterly addictive and clever game experience. You must play this.

FUTURAMA**OVERALL 06**

With a bit more of polish this could have been shinier than Bender's metal ass.

FUR FIGHTERS**OVERALL 08**

Cute fluffy creatures armed to the teeth with shotguns blast each other to pieces. The toy cupboard will never look innocent again.

GHOSTHUNTER**OVERALL 08**

It doesn't quite live up to its [huge] potential but it's original, scary, exciting and well worth a look.

GHOST RECON**OVERALL 07**

A squad-based first person shooter that suffers from a cumbersome interface for ordering troops about, often degenerating into arcade-style run-and-gun gaming.

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO**OVERALL 06**

The Reaper might be cool, but loading times hamper this port of a complex PC battle game.

GITAROO MAN**OVERALL 08**

If you have a PS2 collection, you should definitely have at least one game like this one in there! Check it out.

GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA**OVERALL 07**

An impressive racer that is further lifted by clever use of interesting locations.

GRAND THEFT AUTO 3**OVERALL 10**

Not quite as good as its neon-soaked, '80s prequel but it's still fantastic fun and can now be found for bargain prices.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY**OVERALL 10**

Better than GTA 3! Cars, crooks, coke, and chaos with total freedom to do what you want. A must have for any gamer, serious or not.

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC**OVERALL 09**

If you didn't know already, GT3 is the greatest racing game in the world. Speed down to the store and buy it now.

GRAN TURISMO CONCEPT: 2002 TOKYO-GENEVA**OVERALL 08**

A more accessible version of GT3, with concept cars. Perfect for those who just want to race, rather than play mechanic.

GRAN TURISMO 4: PROLOGUE**OVERALL 08**

Has the distinct feel of being a demo, but will definitely keep racing freaks happy until Gran Turismo 4 hits shelves.

GREGORY HORROR SHOW**OVERALL 08**

A truly ghoulish treat for fans of the survival horror genre who fancy something a little different.

G-SURFERS**OVERALL 07**

Futuristic racer that's improved by an innovative track editor.

GUILTY GEAR X**OVERALL 08**

Pushes hard at beat-'em-up boundaries. The start of a new wave of next-gen 2D fighters.

GUNGRAVE**OVERALL 06**

Bizarre Manga inspired shooting game with gorgeous visuals, but a distinct lack of depth to back up all that eye candy.

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE**OVERALL 07**

A mech shooter for robot obsessive-types everywhere.

HALF-LIFE**OVERALL 09**

The award-winning PC first-person shooter/adventure arrives on PS2 in resplendent form. An essential purchase.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS**OVERALL 08**

Simplistic puzzles and gorgeous graphics make this a winner for younger fans of the books and films.

HARRY POTTER: QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP**OVERALL 07**

Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup is an entertainingly original title, but lacking in variety and challenge.

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN**OVERALL 09**

A disturbingly realistic take on living the life of a hired killer. Not one for the squeamish, but it contains brilliant gaming.

HITMAN: CONTRACTS**OVERALL 08**

Patient assassins will be rewarded with creative gameplay, but action junkies might find the pace a bit too slow.

INDIANA JONES & THE EMPEROR'S TOMB**OVERALL 07**

High adventure 3D platform gaming let down by some unforgivable technical issues.

I-NINJA**OVERALL 07**

While I-Ninja is packed with varied gameplay, its original elements are largely superfluous. Worth a rent though.

JAK II: RENEGADE**OVERALL 10**

Darker and more challenging than its predecessor, Jak II is the best platform game we've ever seen!

JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY**OVERALL 09**

A brilliant platformer from the makers of Crash Bandicoot that introduces two heroes you'll be seeing a lot more of.

JAMES BOND: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING**OVERALL 08**

Looks and plays just like the films. Maybe a little too Metal Gear Solid-like but it's perfect popcorn action.

JUDGE DREDD: DREDD VS DEATH**OVERALL 08**

A little lightweight but the multiplayer modes and arcade missions keep Dredd out of jail.

JURASSIC PARK: PROJECT GENESIS**OVERALL 07**

A prehistoric premise, sure. But Operation Genesis puts a fresh spin on the God sim genre. Hammond would be proud.

KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO**OVERALL 06**

A padded-out Training mode makes up for this smart ninja fighter's otherwise rather limited nature.

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER**OVERALL 08**

A bit too similar to Tony Hawk for our liking, but still the best surfing game around.

KILLSWITCH**OVERALL 07**

As third-person shooters go, it's quite a lot of fun. Just don't go expecting the next Splinter Cell.

KINGDOM HEARTS**OVERALL 08**

A beautifully produced RPG with Disney and Square characters. Don't let the kiddie vibe fool you, this one's very tough.

KLONIA 2: LUNATEA'S VEIL**OVERALL 08**

Cute and cheerful platformer featuring the lovable glove-eared blue cat-rabbit hybrid. Fun stuff.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001**OVERALL 06**

A more-than-competent boxing sim. Not a match for Rocky though.

KY: DARK LINEAGE**OVERALL 07**

A well-rounded platforming experience. Missing a few bells and whistles but very respectable fun.

LARGO WINCH**OVERALL 05**

Based on a French comic character, this spy game is too linear, and lacks the interactivity that is needed to maintain a gamer's attention.

LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFANCE**OVERALL 08**

Legacy of Kain: Defiance is a fitting new chapter. Huge, bloody and pretty. Get ready to spill some blood.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING**OVERALL 05**

'Violent ballet' with a shortage of modes and options. There are much better recreations of Pro wrestling.

LE MANS 24 HOURS**OVERALL 08**

Accessible for gamers daunted by sim-style vehicle handling, but has depth and thrills.

BRONZE**OVERALL 08**

PlayStation 2
★★★★★

SILVER
PlayStation 2
★★★★★

BRONZE
PlayStation 2
★★★★★



LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

Meaty button-mashing for the masses. Movie-to-game licenses are almost never this good. And it's a two-player game.

MAZE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER

A hype-free, classy intermesh of different styles makes for one of the most compelling games of the year.

MADDEN NFL 2004

Not just for those who already love padding-up, this is a great game, whatever your tastes.

MAFIA

Mafia is a slick title that could have been a classic if the driving sections weren't so dull. Close but no cigar.

MANHUNT

Manhunt is a solid, enjoyable stealth-em-up with utterly engaging gameplay. Not one for the kiddies, however.

MAX PAYNE 2: THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE

Horrendously long loading times and jerkiness spoil some of the best shootouts gaming has to offer.

MAXIMO VS ARMY OF ZIN

Much more accessible than its prequel, with an even more engaging plot.

MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN

A game? A movie? MOH is a gruelling experience that packs the best of both worlds.

METAL ARMS: GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM

If you love blowing stuff up then this will do more than whet your appetite for destruction.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage game that's reason enough to buy a PS2. A superbly paced, gripping story.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE

Incredibly comprehensive Metal Gear package for newbies but MGS2 owners will struggle to find \$110's worth.

MICROMACHINES

Nothing particularly 'next-gen' about this instalment of the series, but an excellent racing diversion nonetheless.

MIDWAY'S ARCADE TREASURES

Beer Tapper alone is worth the \$40. Trust us, when this Beer touches your lips it tastes so good! A great retro collection.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE - OPERATION SURMA

Captures the stealthy stuff perfectly but ignores the other M:I staples - car chases and hot chicks!

MOTO GP 2

A refreshing bike racer. Slightly repetitive gameplay and a shallow multiplayer, but slick, fast and realistic. Excellent 3D graphics and race replay facility.

MOTO GP 3

A little repetitive and far too similar to the last two games. Still, it's the best motorbike game on the system thus far.

MTX: MOTOTRAX

Despite a few disappointing features, MTX Mototrax is worth wearing some fluorescent leathers for.

MUPPET PARTY CRUISE

All your favourite Muppets battling it out in a series of wacky multiplayer mini-games. Despite some problems, Muppet Party Cruise is still great fun to party with and worthy of an all-nighter.

MUSIC 3000

A slightly authoritative music title, which works as a fun diversion or a serious tool. Unmissable for wannabe bedroom artists.

MX UNLEASHED

A must for petrol heads. Motocross games are heading in the right direction with MX Unleashed.

NBA 2K3

Not only realistic, but packed with plenty of features as well, offering a wide selection of game modes.

NBA LIVE 2004

Noticeable better than 2003, but how much more can EA cram into their sports games?

NBA STREET VOLUME 2

A must-own for hoop fans and anyone looking for a solid multiplayer title.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2
★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MACHINkrewe

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SILVER
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BRONZE
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BRONZE
PlayStation 2
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★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MACHINkrewe

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MACHINkrewe

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

A must-own for hoop fans and anyone looking for a solid multiplayer title.

NEED FOR SPEED: UNDERGROUND

Sexy, in A1 nick, goes like a greased rat up a drain pipe, ground shaking stereo, no previous owners. It's a steal.

NFL 2K3

This is the game to own for anyone into American football thanks to its ultra-realistic graphics and gameplay.

NFL STREET

Forget street cricket, NFL Street is so fun that it'll have kids playing it on the streets, yelling "go long".

NHL 2K3

Excellent simulation settings for the die-hard fans, and plenty of arcade thrills for the rest of us.

NHL 2004

PS2's finest NHL romp. You'll enjoy this even if you think Wayne Gretzky is some kind of Polish Soup.

NIGHTSHADE

Another hard and fast does of ninja action. It's perfect for anyone who's followed Shinobi from way back when.

ONIMUSHI BLADE WARRIORS

Decent four-player fighting game featuring Onimusha characters. If you have a multi-tap, or a thirst for demon slaying, this is well worth it.

ONIMUSHI: WARLORDS

Impressive survival horror that lets the PlayStation 2 run riot. Does suffer from an iffy PAL conversion, though.

ONIMUSHI 3: DEMON SIEGE

Epic time-travelling samurai adventure starring Jean Reno that's destined to become classic, in anyone's books.

OPERATION WINBACK

Lacks variety, but still an enjoyable stealth shooter, nevertheless.

TIME TO WIPEOUT!

A game that's as much about style as it is substance!



WIPEOUT 2097

The very success of PlayStation 2 can largely be credited to the WipeOut games. For many years, videogames were not touched by anyone who wasn't a spotty teenaged boy. Now of course, everyone and their dogs seem to own a PS2. WipeOut was a top racer, but it also brought contemporary style and a hot soundtrack to loungerooms everywhere. The talented heads at Designer's Republic in the UK (who were responsible for album cover artwork for The Shamen, The Orb and Aphex Twin) were behind the graphics and the WipeOut games gave featured top tracks from the dance music industry's luminaries. Producers that have had their tracks featured on WipeOut games include Leftfield, Orbital and The Prodigy. With huge doses of speed on top, this is just like a rave...

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MACHINkrewe

★ OVERALL 08

SILVER
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MACHINkrewe

★ OVERALL 09

BRONZE
PlayStation 2
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BRONZE
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MACHINkrewe

★ OVERALL 07

BRONZE
PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MACHINkrewe

★ OVERALL 08

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC

Rayman offers plenty of 'armless fun' but he's no match for Ratchets or Racoons.

RED DEAD REVOLVER

The classic western is resurrected with a double-barrelled dose of action and fun.

RED FACTION

Ace first-person shooter that melds MGS-style tactics and the all-out blasting of the hallowed Quake III.

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X

A captivating story, cinematic atmosphere, kinetic action, frights, thrills and copious amounts of blood-letting.

RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN

Only the high standards of the FPS competition prevent this from being a truly essential buy.

REZ

Exploring the relationship between sound and colour this technon shooter provides pure gameplay. Unique, and refreshing.

RIDGE RACER V

A popular racer, but high hopes were scuppered by the limited size and a lack of originality.

RISE TO HONOUR

This is as close as you can get to being Jet Li without spending a decade in a Shao Lin temple.

ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY

A cel-shaded shooter that brings the classic anime to life, but is held back by a decidedly clunky control system.

ROCKY

The best boxing title available for PS2. Has a great story mode that takes the player through the movies.

R-RACING

Takes the Ridge Racer series to new, more realistic areas. A fine racer, but you'll get more bang for your buck elsewhere. We wonder if they'll stick with the new formula...

R-TYPE FINAL

An old-skool shoot-em-up fan's dream, but inconsistent play won't win legions of new fans. Makes up for being a little short with oodles of challenge and copious amounts of unlockables.

RUGBY 2004

Covers the entirety of the sport well but fails to capture the true feel of it.

RUGBY LEAGUE

An entertaining game which neglected NRL fans can finally enjoy. Long-awaited, but very satisfying!

RUN LIKE HELL

A refreshing sci-fi survival horror title with a host of famous names handling the voice acting.

SERIOUS SAM: NEXT ENCOUNTER

Mindless violence at its golden best. Fast, frantic, action-packed, witty, gung-ho, noisy, dumb blasting!

SHADOW OF MEMORIES

Filmic adventure that keeps the surprises coming with a serpentine plot.

SHINONI

Shinobi is the kind of frantic, shallow, old school arcade game we don't see enough of anymore. A fast and bloody good time.

SILENT HILL 2

One of the most atmospheric and genuinely frightening titles on PS2. Like all of your worst nightmares rolled in to one game.

SILENT HILL 3

The nastiest game on PlayStation 2 - we dare you to play it!

SILENT SCOPE 2

A worthwhile update of this arcade sniper sim, though the formula is looking tired now.

SINGSTAR

Karaoke with an edge. This gem is set to

change your loungeroom forever.

SKY ODYSSEY

A flight sim where you don't have to shoot anything, just complete crazy missions.



SLED STORM OVERALL 06
A maxed-out, splashy remake of the PSone racing classic, very much in the SSX mould.

SMASH COURT TENNIS PRO TOURNAMENT 2 OVERALL 07
Not a bad tennis game by any stretch. Unfortunately we wanted to see a few more aces served up. Tennis fans would be better off going for the superior Virtua Tennis 2.

SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORIES OVERALL 07
Impressively big, fast and frantic, but not much different to its predecessor.

SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS ★ OVERALL 08
Finally! This is it! The online game we've all been waiting for!

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

SONIC HEROES OVERALL 07
Sonic Heroes is a solid platformer that pays homage to its classic routes but the ol' hedgehog has failed to evolve ...

SOUL CALIBUR 2 ★ OVERALL 10
Finely crafted gameplay, stunning visuals and a high level of polish make SCII an essential purchase.

GOLD
PlayStation 2

SPIDER-MAN OVERALL 07
It doesn't display huge innovations over its PSone counterpart, although it's a solid and enjoyable Spidey title either way.

SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY OVERALL 07
If you're sick of characters crappling on and on in cut-scenes then this will be right up your alley.

SSX 3 ★ OVERALL 09
Delivers an avalanche of adrenalin rushing action, unlike any other snowboarding title out there.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

STARSKY & HUTCH OVERALL 07
Given the lack of gameplay variety this cop caper shouldn't be as consistently enjoyable as it is.

STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER OVERALL 07
Gorgeous to look at, taking the gamer into the Star Wars universe, but is let down by repetitive gameplay.

STAR WARS: CLONE WARS OVERALL 07
One for the Star Wars collectors, and a great battlefield in its own right. Shallow but still worth investigation.

STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER ★ OVERALL 09
Mesmerising 3D Star Wars blaster with engaging missions and film-perfect sound effects. Great fun.

STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING OVERALL 05
Banal cartoon kart racer. The Force is weak with this one.

STATE OF EMERGENCY OVERALL 06
A shallow but worryingly enjoyable game that puts the player at the centre of a riot.

STREET FIGHTER EX3 OVERALL 06
A decent enough 2D/3D fighting game, but is milking the series to death. There are better 2D fighters from the same company.

STREET HOOPS OVERALL 06
More about collecting fancy duds than having a decent game of basketball, which is why this hoops title misses from the line.

STUNTMAN ★ OVERALL 08
Won't have the wide appeal of the Driver games due to its difficulty, but it's an ingenious concept that thrills and entertains.

SUMMER HEAT BEACH VOLLEYBALL OVERALL 07
The best crack at beach volleyball we've seen, but nothing to really set your gaming soul on fire.

SUMMONER 2 ★ OVERALL 08
Follow-up to the RPG launch title. More action-oriented than the original, but still an epic adventure for fans of fantasy.

SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE OVERALL 04
A by-the-book arcade racing game round desolate cities. Nothing to recommend it.

SWORD OF THE SAMURAI OVERALL 07
Sword of the Samurai is a slow, ponderous, but intelligent game that combines strategy with gore.

TARZAN FREERIDE OVERALL 04
Based on a Disney film of the same name, this tries to be different with 'surfing' tree branches, but it doesn't work.

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT ★ OVERALL 08
Fantastically playable and graphically spectacular beat-'em-up. The tagging moves make it a worthwhile purchase.

TEKKEN 4 ★ OVERALL 09
Continuing the tradition of fighting game excellence. The first Tekken game to include free-movement.

TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN ★ OVERALL 08
An infusion of ninja style and killer gameplay across nine sumptuous levels. A great return to form for a classic title.

TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES OVERALL 06
Like Amie, this game is a likeable dinosaur. Big guns and explosions but last-generation gameplay.

THE GETAWAY ★ OVERALL 09
Sony's answer to Grand Theft Auto, with a decidedly darker and nastier storyline. Offers an amazingly life-like replica of London.

THE HOBBIT OVERALL 07
The Hobbit is a game devoid of challenge and originality, and strictly for the younger Tolkien fans.

THE HULK OVERALL 07
Not a smash-hit, but not damaged goods either. An enjoyable beat 'em' up; shame about those stealth sections though.

THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN ★ OVERALL 08
Combine the show's best elements with the best of GTA and you've got an instant, charming winner.

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE OVERALL 06
It's Crazy Taxi but with Bart and Homer behind the wheel.

THE SIMS: BUSTIN' OUT ★ OVERALL 08
Bustin' Out is slicker than the last game but without enough gameplay enhancements to make it essential.

THE SUFFERING ★ OVERALL 08
Fans of action and/or horror should definitely NOT miss this one. It's an adventure you won't forget in a hurry.

THE THING ★ OVERALL 08
Not only does it do justice to the classic horror film, but also introduces fear and trust issues to the survival-horror genre.

THEME PARK WORLD OVERALL 07
Take on the role of a theme park tycoon for a day in this engaging god sim, where pleasing the crowds and getting those turnstiles a-spinning is your prime directive.

THIS IS SOCCER 2004 OVERALL 07
The pros outweigh the cons but the cons are annoying. TIS is not as good as Pro Evo 3, but it's certainly closing in.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004 ★ OVERALL 08
The best golf game on PS2, but we're holding our breath for next year's online version.

TIME CRISIS 3 ★ OVERALL 08
Action-packed arcade bullet-fest with plenty of lure for the casual player. Very similar to Time Crisis 2 though.

TIMESPLITTERS 2 ★ OVERALL 10
Takes the multiplayer from TimeSplitters and adds heaps of options. Major visual upgrades, I-Link for 16-player games – the works!

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: JUNGLE STORM ★ OVERALL 08
As a budget-priced tactical shooter, Jungle Storm is an absolute bargain. Spend the savings on face paint.

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3 OVERALL 07
It falls short of being brilliant. If only it had gone that extra mile. Fingers crossed for next time.

TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL ★ OVERALL 10
Move over Snake, Sam's the new special agent in town! Splinter Cell is an innovative game with some very cool touches.

TOM C'S SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW ★ OVERALL 09
Eight new missions, superb multiplayer and some extra features make Pandora Tomorrow a brilliant package.

TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS ★ OVERALL 08
A little on the slow side but there's no doubt Lara's appeal. The original superstar is back!

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND ★ OVERALL 09
Neversoft has turned the Hawk series into a Vice City-style adventure. And they've lost none of the charm doing it.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATE 2 ★ OVERALL 09
Games this terrible really ARE scary. We shudder just thinking about it!

TRANSFORMERS ★ OVERALL 08
Intense battles, giant bosses, sweet graphics and over-the-top action! A superb fix for the shooter addicts.

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA ★ OVERALL 08
A solid shooter that takes GTA's ideas and improves many of them, but loses something along the way.

TUROK: EVOLUTION OVERALL 06
Boasts a wicked line-up of weapons and a variety of gaming styles, but suffers from crappy AI and frame rate issues.

TWISTED METAL: BLACK ★ OVERALL 08
This is everything that you'd expect a Twisted Metal game to be on PS2 – and then some.

UEFA EURO 2004 ★ OVERALL 08
There are a lot of standout elements here, but the core game is yet to catch up to FIFA or Pro Evolution Soccer 3.

UNREAL TOURNAMENT ★ OVERALL 08
Totally over-the-top first-person shooter. Makes for a nice alternative to Quake III, but is outclassed totally by TimeSplitters 2.

VAN HELSING ★ OVERALL 07
A quality action title that holds true to the film and holds up against similar titles, such as the excellent Devil May Cry.

V-RALLY 3 ★ OVERALL 08
Not as instantly playable as WRC II Extreme or Colin McRae Rally 3 but effort pays off with some very satisfying racing.

V8 SUPERCAR RACE DRIVER ★ OVERALL 09
Real damage. Real V8s. Real Aussie tracks. Real fun. The best racing game seen so far on the PlayStation 2!

VAMPIRE NIGHT ★ OVERALL 08
A vampire-blasting light gun extravaganza that looks great but has questionable replay value once the bad boys are all put to rest.

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 EVOLUTION ★ OVERALL 08
Packed with things to do, VF4 still lacks the outright fun that makes Soul Calibur a game for everyone.

VIRTUA TENNIS 2 ★ OVERALL 08
Far and away the best Tennis simulation to grace the PS2. The World Circuit mode provides an awesome long term challenge.

WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED ★ OVERALL 08
It may be a little wet behind the ears but Unleashed has just as many thrills as its extreme brothers.

WAR OF THE MONSTERS ★ OVERALL 07
War of the Monsters is a big, brash game that explodes with charm and burns brightly... but not for very long.

WAY OF THE SAMURAI 2 ★ OVERALL 08
10 days in the life of a samurai – the multiple endings are interesting and the combat is unlike any we've seen before.

WHIPLASH ★ OVERALL 07
A great sense of humour and warped characters save Whiplash from obscurity as a platformer.

WIPEOUT FUSION ★ OVERALL 09
Style and substance are here in the most fully realised Wipeout yet. This future racer is as smart and extreme as it gets.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RUGBY ★ OVERALL 08
A hard-hitting game that encapsulates everything about the sport. The best Union title available at the moment.

WORMS 3D ★ OVERALL 07
Drooling Worms fanatics – you know who you are – will grab this in a flash but anyone who drinks their tequila without the little wriggly guys will want to wait for Worms 3D 2.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

SILVER<

INSIDE GAMING

OPS2 sneaks into the Hollywood gaming studios for the inside scoop on Harry Potter

OPS2: The three of you – Ron, Hermione and yourself – have come a long way together. The books, then the movies and then the games. Are you as close as you've always been?

Harry Potter: Oh, of course. They're really great, great people to work with. Well, I don't see why they had to get playtime in my game – I mean, it's not called Harry, Ron, Hermione and the Prisoner of Azkaban, is it? What's with Ron and that stupid red hair anyway? My aunt Petunia said you should never trust a redhead, and I'm starting to agree. He's got those squinty little eyes and, quite frankly, I'm starting to be afraid when we go back up to our dorm to go to sleep at night. And don't even get me started on Hermione. I mean, what kind of name is Hermione? And then it's all, "Harry, do this. Harry, do that," until I could just SCREAM. But, yeah, they're fantastic, and I love 'em to death.

OPS2: So you think the game could've been improved upon, then?

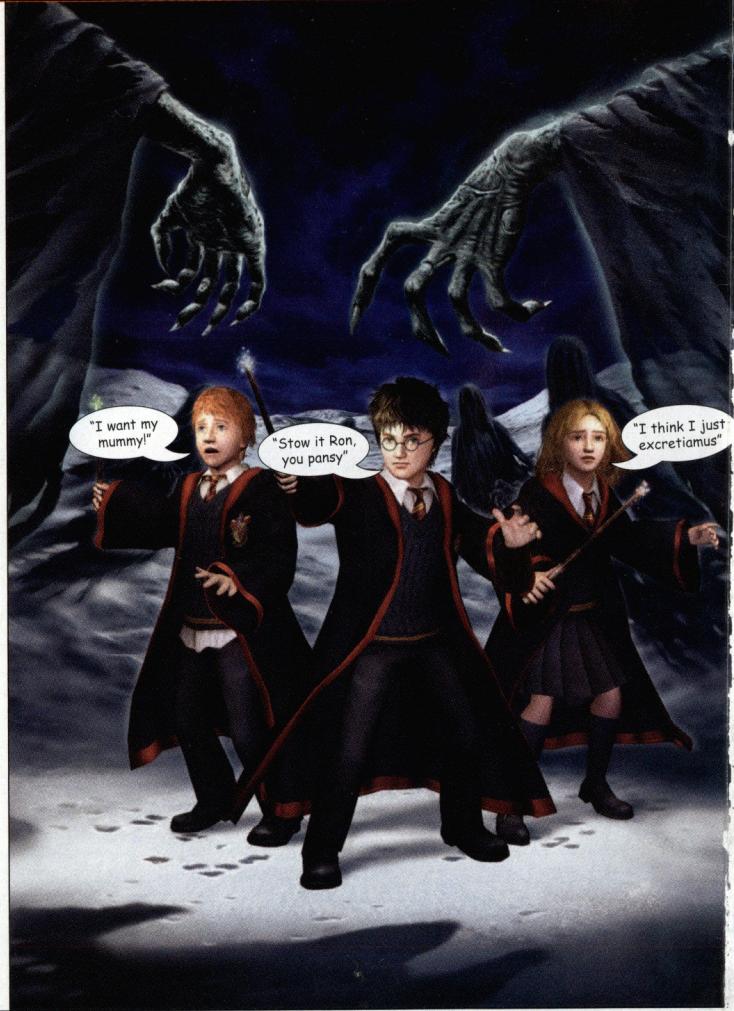
Harry Potter: Well, yeah. I don't need those two to make a decent game. All this character-switching just confuses matters, especially when there's all this complex

puzzle solving as well. In real life, Ron and Hermione couldn't think their way out of bed in the morning, let alone solving the kind of puzzles you get in the game.

They're just riding on my popularity and brains. I'm the one who's gotten us this far. Anything decent you find in the game, that's my idea. The griffon flying? Yeah, I thought of that one. The EyeToy minigames was me, too. I thought the gamers might want to get away from Ron's ugly mug for a bit. Of course, EA saw the value of my ideas straight away, and didn't hesitate to use them. It's good, too, because I can charge them royalties for that.

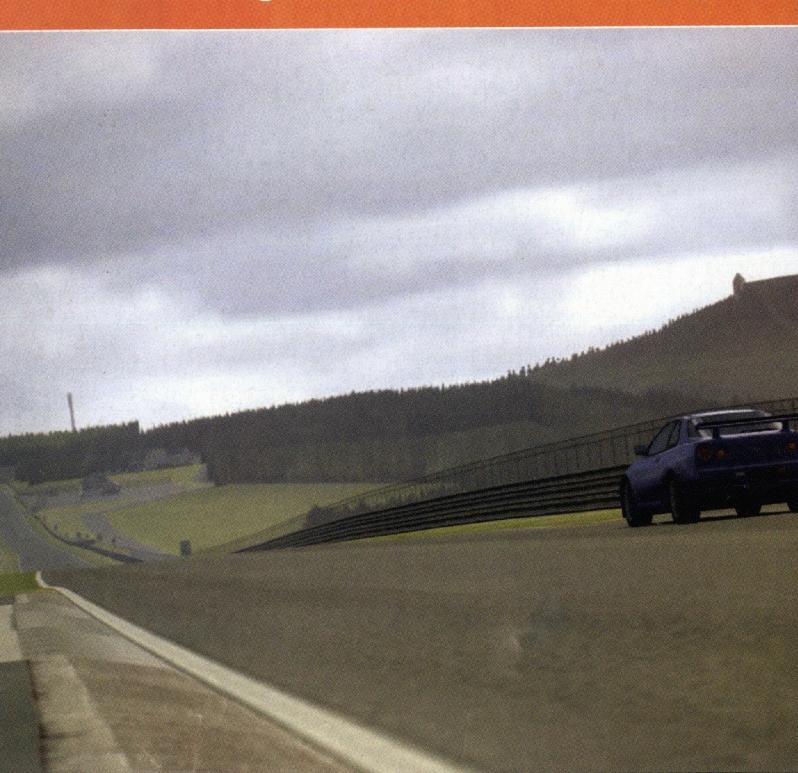
OPS2: You're kind of a big name these days. Would you say that fame has affected you and changed who you are?

Harry Potter: No, not at all. I've always been famous – the only difference now is that I'm famous in the Muggle world as well as the wizarding world. I suppose it's only natural, though. I've quite a bit more money now, but if you'll look closely, you'll see I'm still the same boy who used to live in a cupboard under the stairs. Now shoo – I have to get my nails done.



GRAN TURISMO 4

We nail the king of the road down for a huge preview!



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The game that lets you control stuff with your mind – seriously

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We catch up with the fastest racer on the PS2 block!

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